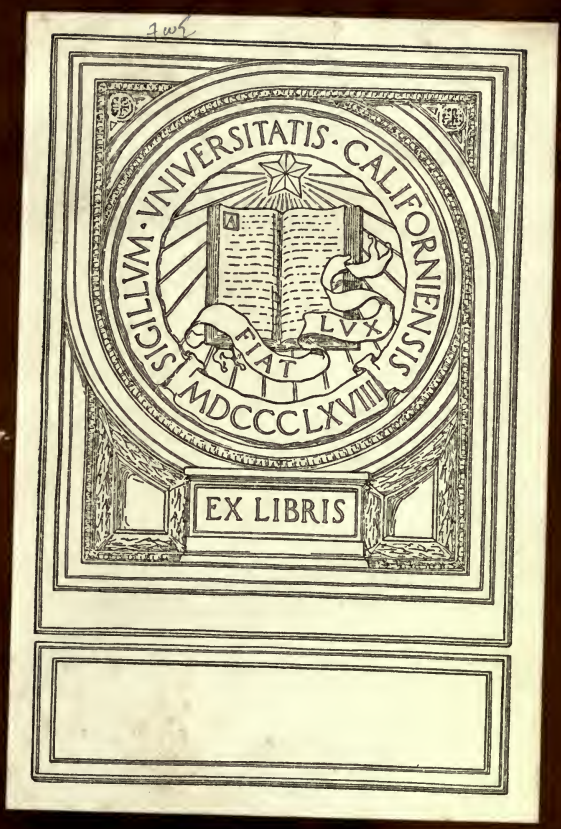
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Aldrich's 2nd book

DAISY'S NECKLACE:

And What Came of It.

(A LITERARY EPISODE.)

BY

T. B. ALDRICH.

The little dogs and all,
. . . . . see, they bark at me!
KING LEAR.

NEW-YORK:
DERBY & JACKSON, 119 NASSAU STREET.
CINCINNATI: H. W. DERBY & Co.

1857.

TO

C. L. F.,

THE NOBLE MERCHANT AND THE GOOD FRIEND,

THIS BURLESQUE OF THINGS IN GENERAL,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

CONTENTS.

TO THE

UNFORTUNATE READER.

In this little Extravaganza, I have done just what I intended.

I have attempted to describe, in an auto-biographical sort of way, a well-meaning, but somewhat vain young gentleman, who, having flirted desperately with the Magazines, takes it into his silly head to write a novel, all the chapters of which are laid before the reader, with some running criticism by T. James Barescythe, Esquire, the book-noticer of "The Morning Glory," ("a journal devoted to the Fine Arts and the Amelioration of all Mankind,") and the type of a certain class which need not be distinctly specified for recognition. I have endeavored to make the novel of my literary hero such a one as a young man with fine taste and crude talent might produce; and I think I have succeeded. It is certainly sufficiently unfinished.

In drawing the character of Barescythe, the point of my quill may have pierced a friend; and if you ask, like Ludovico,

"What shall be said of thee?"

I shall answer, like Othello,

"Why, anything:
An honorable murderer, if you will;
For nought I did in hate, but all in honor."

The only audacious thing I have done is the writing of this preface. If there is anything more stupid than a "preface," it is a book-critic. If anything *could* be more stupid than a book-critic, it would be a preface. But, thank heaven, there is not. In saying this, I refer to a particular critic; for I would not, for the sake of a tenth edition, malign in such a wholesale manner those capital good fellows of the press—those *verbal accoucheurs* who are so pleasantly officious at the birth of each new genius. Not I. I have

"A fellow-feeling"

and a love for them, which would seem like a bid for their good nature, if expressed here.

I have put my name on the title-page of this trifle from principle. My pen-children are all mine,

and I cannot think of disowning one, though it may happen to be born hump-backed. But I beg of you, gentlest of unfortunate readers, not to take Daisy's Necklace as a serious exponent of my skill at story-telling. It is *not* printed at the "urgent request of numerous friends"—I am so fortunate as not to have many—but a seductive little argument in the shape of a *cheque* is the sole cause of its present form; otherwise, I should be content to let it die an easy death in the columns of the journal which first had the temerity to publish it. If the world could always know, as it may in this case, why a book is printed, it would look with kindlier eyes on dullness bound in muslin. It would say, with honest Sancho Panza: "Let us not look the gift-horse in the mouth."

When the sunshine of this dear old world has reddened the wine in my heart—melted down its sparkles to a creamy flavor, I will give you a richer draught—mayhap a beaker of Hippocrene.

Till then, may God's blessing be on us both, though neither of us deserve it.

Clinton Place, 1856.

PROLOGUE.

It hath beene sayed, and it seemeth soe untoe me, that ye man who writes a booke maist have much vanitie and vexation of spirite.

Ye Two Poore Authors.

PROLOGUE.

"Mrs. Muggins!"

"Yes, sir."

"Say that I am sick. Say I am dead—buried—out of town. In short, say anything you will; but deny my existence to every one who calls, with the exception of Mr. Barescythe."

"Yes, sir."

"I am going to write a novel, Mrs. Muggins!"

That lady did not exhibit much emotion.

"Yes, sir."

And Mrs. Muggins ambled out of the room-door, to which she had been summoned by some peremptory appeals of my bell. I was somewhat shocked at the cool manner with which Mrs. Muggins received the literary intelligence; but she, poor,

simple soul, did not know that my greatness was a-ripening.

"Some of these days," said I to myself, turning toward the window, "some of these days, mayhap a hundred years hence, as the stranger passes through Washington Parade Ground, this house—wrinkled and old then—will be pointed out to his wonder-loving eyes as the one in which my novel was written; and the curious stranger will cut his name on the walls of the room which I never occupied, and carry away a slice of the door-step!"

I immediately fell in love with this fascinating thought, and followed it up.

The slender trees which now inhabit the Parade Ground had grown immensely—the trunks of some were three feet in diameter, and around them all was a massive iron railing. The brick and brownstone houses on Waverly Place and Fourth-street had long been removed, and huge edifices with cast-iron fronts supplanted them. I looked in vain for the little drug-store on the corner with its red and green bottles, and the fruit-man's below with its show of yellow bananas and sour oranges. The University, dimly seen through the interlacing branches, was a classic ruin.

Everything was changed and new.

All the old land-marks were gone, save the

Parade Ground, and one quaint old house facing Mac Dougal-street: the which house was propped up with beams, for, long and long ago, before "the memory of the oldest inhabitant" even, an author, a sweet quiet man, once wrote a famous book there, and the world of 1956 would preserve the very floors he trod on!

And so I sat there by my window in the autumnal sunshine, and watched the golden clouds as the wind blew them against the square white turrets of the University, which peered above the trees.

Ah, Mrs. Muggins, thought I, though you only said "yes, sir," when I spoke of my novel—though your name is carved in solid brass on the hall-door, yet you will be forgotten like a rain that fell a thousand years ago, when *my* name, only stamped with printer's ink, on ephemeral slips of paper, is a household word.

So I came to pity Mrs. Muggins, and harbored no ill feelings toward the simple creature who was so speedily to be gathered under the dusty wings of oblivion. I wondered how she could be cheerful. I wondered if she ever thought of being "dead and forgotten," and if it troubled her.

Lost in the aromatic fumes of a regalia, I sat waiting the advent of my friend Barescythe—Barry

for short—to whom I had addressed a laconic note, begging him to visit me at my rooms without delay.

I like Barescythe.

He is conceited, but that's a small fault with genius. His idea of literature does not exactly chime with mine, for he believes that there have been no novels, to speak of, since Scott's, and little poetry since Pope's. But, aside from this, he is a noble fellow; he carries his heart, like a falcon, on his hand, where everybody can see it. Barry is fond of wine—but that's a failing *not* peculiar to genius, and *not* confined to book-critics. He is a trifle rough in speech, not always the thing in manners; but "the elements so mix in him"—that I have a great mind to finish that excellent quotation.

I heard his familiar step on the stairs, and a second afterwards he kicked open my room-door with his characteristic disregard of ceremony.

"Ralph," said he, with some anxiety, "what's up?"

"Sit down!"

"Are you sick?"

"No."

"Are you going to be?"

"No."

"Then why, in the name of the many-headed Hydra, did you send me such an article as this? Read it."

The note ran as follows:

"*Mac Dougal-street,*
"*June* 30, 18—.

"DEAR BARRY,—

"Come and see me without delay. I have got a—

"Eternally,
"RALPH."

"O, yes!" said I, laughing; "I left out a word. I meant to have said, 'I have got an idea.'"

"Humph! I thought it was a colic."

Mr. Barescythe had left a host of editorial duties in the middle and busiest time of the day, expecting to find me lying at the point of death, and was quite out of humor because I was not.

There is something extremely human in Barescythe.

"Criticus," I spoke as deliberately as the subject would allow, "I am going to write a novel."

This unfortunate avowal was the rose-leaf which caused the cup of his indignation to overflow.

"If it had been a case of cholera," commenced

Barescythe, with visible emotion, "or the measles, or the croup, or the chicken-pox—if you had broken your thigh, spine, or neck, I wouldn't have complained. But a *novel*—"

And Barry began whistling wildly,

as he invariably does when annoyed. After using up a variety of popular airs, the shadow of his good-humor returned to him.

"Ralph," he said, taking my hand, "I have a great respect for you. I don't know why, to be frank, but I have. I like your little song of—what do you call it?—in Putnam's Monthly, and your prose sketches in the Knickerbocker; but don't be a fool, Ralph!"

With which piece of friendly advice, he put on his brown felt hat, drew it over his brows, and stalked out of the room, with

> "A countenance more
> In sorrow than in anger,"

like Mr. Hamlet's father.

I saw no more of Barescythe for two weeks.

The summer months flew away.

The nights were growing longer. The air had a vein of sparkling cold in it; at every gust the trees in the Parade Ground shook down golden ingots; and the grass-plots, and the graveled walks, and the marble bowl of the fountain, were paved with emerald and amethyst—a mosaic flooring of tinted leaves. The clouds were haggard faces, and the wind wailed like a broken heart. Indeed,

> "The melancholy days had come,
> The saddest of the year,"

and Mrs. Muggins had made a fire in my grate!

Blessings on him who invented fire-places! A poor day-dreamer's benediction go with him! The world in the grate! I have watched its fantastic palaces and crimson inhabitants — dipped my pen, as it were, into its stained rivers, and written their grotesqueness! Dizzy bridges, feudal castles, great yawning caves, and red-hot gnomes, are to be found in the grate; mimic volcanos, and ships that sail into sparry grottos, and delicate fire-shells with pink and blue lips!

Crash!

The coals sink down, and new figures are born, like the transient pictures in a kaleidescope. So it came to pass that I dozed over the metempsychosis of my fire-world, and commenced the novel.

Give me crisp winter days for writing, and the long snowy nights for dreamy slumber.

O antique humorist, quaint-mouthed Sancho Panza! with you, I say, "Blessings on the man who invented sleep!" Sleep, pleasant sleep!—that little airy nothing on the eyelids!—that little spell of thought which comes from no place and goes nowhere! — which comes upon us silently and splendidly, like a falling star, and trails its golden fancies on our waking hours. Sleep for the young—fresh, dewy sleep! Sleep for the sick! Sleep for the weary and disconsolate — sweet dreams and sweet forgetfulness for *them!* Smooth the white hairs of the old; place thy invisible fingers on their lips; close their eyes gently, gently, Sleep, and let them pass into nothingness!

In a dreamy mood, half awake and half asleep, I filled sheet after sheet with my curious back-handed chirography. The white feathery snow came down cygnet-soft, and I wrote. I heard the wind ditties in the chimney, the merry wrangling of sleigh-bells, the sonorous clash of fire-bells, and the manuscript grew under my pen, as if by magic. I came to love the nurslings of my fancy as no one else will. I liked the cold, cynical features of Mr. Flint, with his undertaker's aspect; the child-spirit, Bell; Daisy Snarle's eyes; the heart-broken old sailor; the pale

book-keeper; Tim, the office boy; Mr. Hardwill, the great publisher; Joe Wilkes, and all of them!

Mrs. Muggins occasionally looked in on me.

Mrs. Muggins' regard for me was increasing. She never left the coal-scuttle on the stairs for my benefit, as she used to; she was eternally hearing my bell ring when it didn't, and answering it so promptly when it did, that I began to think that she lived night and day just outside my door.

Pleasant Mrs. Muggins!

I tried not to feel elated at these little widowy attentions; but *los hombres son mortales.*

She handed me my coffee with a motherly tenderness that was perfectly touching. She looked at me with the eyes of Solicitude, and spoke with the lips of culminating Respect; and once, in a burst of confidence, she told me that she had six orphan sons, who were "sealurs."

My respect increased for Mrs. Muggins. My novel might run through only one edition, but she,—she had six editions of herself afloat! And I thought that, after all, a woman like her who had produced a half a dozen Neptunes, founded perhaps a half a dozen races, was rendering more service to this apple-like globe, than one poor devil of an author prolifically pregnant with indifferent books.

I spoke to Barescythe about it, and it was pleasant to have him coincide with me once.

It is an agreeable fact, that

> "The world goes up and the world goes down,
> And the sunshine follows the rain."

The new year was four months old. The flowers were teething: the tiny robins were able to go alone, and above the breezy hum of many thousand voices, above the monotonous and ocean-like jar of omnibus wheels, I could hear the babbling of hyaline rills in pleasant woodland places! I could not see the silver threads of water winding in and out among the cool young grass; I could not guess where they were; but through the city smoke, over the dingy chimney-tops, they spake to me with kindly voices!

I knew that daisies were fulling in sunny meadows, and that the dandelion trailed its gold by the dusty road-sides: for

> "The delicate-footed Spring was come."

I knew it by the geranium at my window. It had put forth two sickly leaves. Two sickly leaves for me, and the world alive with vernal things! Spring, thou Queen of the Twelve! Dainty, dewy Spring—

> "Give me a golden pen, and let me lean
> On heaped-up flowers,"

when I write of thee! Thy breath is the amber

sunshine, and thy foot-prints are violets! Hide Winter in thy mantle: crown his cold brow with mignionette: hang morning-glories on his icicles: keep him from me forever!

> "For winter maketh the light heart sad,
> And thou—thou makest the sad heart gay!"

"Barry," said I, "the sunshine has taken me by the hand, to lead me into a sweet New-England village. There is my manuscript. Read it, if you can, condemn it, if you will, and tell me what you think of it when I return."

That awful critic put DAISY'S NECKLACE under his arm, and walked away—a victim to friendship, a literary Damon of the Nineteenth Century.

I.

As children gathering pebbles on the shore.

MILTON.

No daintie flower or herbe that growes on grownd,
No arborett with painted blossomes drest
And smelling sweete, but there it might be found
To bud out faire, and throwe her sweete smels al around.

EDMUND SPENCER.

I.

THE LITTLE CASTLE-BUILDERS.

The House by the Sea—the Round Window—God's Eyes in Flowers—the Day-Dreamers—A Picture—An Angel—Old Nanny—On the Sea-Shore—Shell-Hunting—Bell's Freak and Mortimer's Dream—Asleep.

IMAGINE, if you will, one of the quaintest old country mansions that was ever built—a big-chimneyed, antique-gabled, time-browned old pile, and you have a picture of the Ivyton House as it was in summers gone by.

The pillars of the porch were not to be seen for the fragrant vines which clambered over them; lip-tempting grapes purpled* on the southern gable of

* Mr. Barescythe, with his characteristic word-catching spirit, wishes to know if grapes and cherries are ripe at one and the same time in New-England.

the house, and the full, bright cherries clustered thicker than stars among the leaves. The walks of the garden were white with pebbles brought from the sea-shore; the dewy clover-beds, on each side, lay red with luscious strawberries, as if some one had sprinkled drops of fire over them; and among the larches and the cherry trees there was a salt sea-smell pleasantly mingled with the breathing of wild roses.

A large, round window in one of the gables looked toward the ocean—a fine place for a summer view, or to watch, of a gusty afternoon, the billows as they swell and break in long waving battalions on the beach.

One evening near the end of summer, two children were sitting at this circular window. Ten Aprils had half ripened them. The boy had dark hair, and a touch of sunlight in his darker eyes. The girl was light and delicate—with a face of spiritual beauty, dream-like, heavenly, like the pictures of the Madonna which genius has hung on the chapel walls of the Old World.

"Bell," said the boy, "we never grow weary of looking at the sea."

"No; because while we are watching, we think that father may be coming home to us across its bosom; and we count the waves as if they were

moments. We like to see them roll away, and feel that time grows shorter between father and us."

"Yes, that is so," he replied; "but then, we love night almost as much as the sea."

"That is because we have a Father in heaven as well as one at sea," and the girl shaded her angel face with a dainty little hand.

"And we love the sunbeams and the flowers, Bell!"

"We do, indeed!" cried Bell, and the sunshine nestled among her curls. "We do, indeed! because God, like the good fairy in our story-book, comes in sunlight, or hides in flowers; and he reveals himself in ever so many ways, to all who love him."

"Hides in flowers," repeated the boy, musingly; "I never thought of that. Then, perhaps—only perhaps—the dew-drops which I showed you last night in the white japonica were God's eyes!"

"May be so," returned Bell, simply.

They were two strange children—nature, and, perhaps, circumstances had made them so. They were born and had always lived in the old house. Their mother was in heaven, and their father was one of those who go down to the sea in ships. With no one to teach them, save the old housekeeper Nanny, their minds had taken odd turns

and conceits; they had grown up old people in a hundred ways.

The roar of the winds and the sea had been in their ears from infancy. In the summer months they wandered late on the sandy beaches, or slept with the silent sunshine under the cherry trees. They had grown up with nature, and nature beat in them like another heart. She had imbued them with her richer and tenderer moods.

Bell was the wildest and strangest of the two. She was one of those ærial little creatures who, somehow or other, get into this world sometimes—it must be by slipping through the fingers of the angels, for they seem strangely out of place, and I am sure that they are missed somewhere! They never stay long! They come to earth and sometimes ripen for heaven in a twelve month! The sweetest flowers are those that die in the spring-time: they touch the world with beauty, and are gone, before a ruder breath than that of God scatters their perfume. Bell was a *Gipsy angel*—one of those who wander, for awhile, outside the walls of heaven, in the shady pastures and by-ways of the world.

"Mortimer," said Bell, after a long silence, "how nice it is to sit here and watch the bits of sails coming and going—coming and going, never weary!

I wonder how long we have sat at this window and watched the white specks? I wonder if it will always be so; if you and I will still be here, loving the sea and stars, when our heads are as white as Nanny's?"

"No!" cried the boy, impetuously. "I am going out into the broad, deep world, and write books full of wonderful thought, like the Arabian Nights!"

And he repeated it, the broad, deep world! Ah, child! what have such dreamers as you to do in the broad, deep world—the wonderful, restless sea, where men cast the net of thought and bring up pebbles?

"I would like that, Mort!" cried Bell, clapping her hands. "But then, what a grand place this would be to write them in! You can have your desk by the open window here; and when your eyes are tired, you can rest them on the sea. And I will be *so* quiet—as gentle as pussy, even, and do nothing but make pens for you all the time. Wouldn't that be fine?"

"Yes! and father should go no more away in ships. He might have a yacht to leap over the surge in, to sail around all those little islands and in the green bays; but never go off to sea. The books I am going to write will bring us money enough."

So the little castle-builders talked until the sun had melted into the waves, and twilight, like a pilgrim that had been resting by the road-side, rose up from the beach, and came slowly toward the old house.

Mortimer, who had been gazing dreamily at the beach—which grew fainter and fainter, till it seemed like a white thread running through the selvage of blue drapery—turned his eyes on Bell.

"Bell," said he, quietly, "as you sit there in the shadows, with your beautiful hair folded over your forehead, you look like an angel!"

"Do I?"

"I can put my hand on your neck, yet you seem far away from me."

"Come, rest your head in my lap, Mort," said the girl, tenderly, "and I will tell you of a real true angel who once came into this world."

The chestnut locks of the boy looked darker against her white dress, as Bell bent over him, and commenced, in a low, silvery voice, an old angel legend. She was in the midst of a strange description of Paradise, when a tremulous voice came up the stairway—

"Come to tea, children!"

Then the two looked at each other curiously. It was so odd to be called to tea, and they in Heaven!

It was a long step from Paradise to the supper-table; but the dream was shattered. Bell laughed. Then they closed the window, and descended to the room below, where Nanny had prepared the evening meal of snowy bread and milk, and ripe purple whortleberries. It was very queer to see the three sitting at table—to see homely-looking, but kind-hearted Nanny, between the two children, like a twilight between two pleasant mornings.

When supper was over, and while Nanny was washing the tea-things, the children went down to the beach, shell hunting. The white moon stood directly over the sea, and the waves were full of silvery arrows, as if Diana had scattered them from her quiver. Mortimer's eyes drank in the sight, as they had a thousand times before, for Nature is ever new to her lovers. In the measured roll of the sea, he heard the diapason of a grand poem, and the far-off thunder, heard now and then, was the chorus of the gods.

But Heaven rapt the heart of little Bell! The waves fell on her finer ear like subtlest music; to her they were harps, and the fingers of angels were touching them, while the thunder was "God walking overhead!"

They wandered along the sands, picking up curious shells and cream-white pebbles, dashed with red or

clouded with mazarine. Bell would hold them up to her ear, and listen to the "little whispers," as she called them; but the boy would skim them along the wave-tips, and shout when some great billow caught one, and hurled it back scornfully at his feet.

Bell saw a ridge of rocks which looked like the back of a whale, running out some distance into the sea, where the water was whiter and leaped higher than anywhere else; and soon her dainty feet picked a way over the jagged rocks. The boy was about to send a light shell skipping through the surf, when his glance caught Bell standing on the highest jut of the ledge, the wind lifting her long hair and the folds of her dress.

"Bell! Bell!"

"The stars are in the sea, brother," she replied, "and the winds are wild here."

"Bell! Bell!"

"I cannot come to you. I fear to walk over the rocks again! But it is beautiful here, and I am not afraid!"

"Ah, Bell!" he spoke sadly, "that's what I dreamt. I thought that there was a gulf between us, and when I called, 'Bell! Bell!' you answered, '*I cannot come to you, brother; but you can come to me!*' O, Bell—sister Bell! as you love me, come back. I

tremble when you look so like an angel. Come to me, sister."

Mortimer ran out on the slender bridge of stone and led Bell back by the hand. After a little while they heard Nanny calling them to come home.

The children occupied a small chamber over the front door. A scented vine clomb all about the window, and taught the ruddy sun at morning to throw a subdued light into the room; and it broke the orange stream of sunset. At night the dreamers from their bed could see the stars hanging like fruit among its cloudy leaves.

When Bell and Mortimer came up from the sea-beach, the moonlight, breaking through this leafy lattice, made the chamber as that of Abon Ben Adhem—"like a lily in bloom." Nanny brought a lamp, and kissed them good-night.

"O, we don't want a lamp all this moon!" cried Bell.

The boy sat half undressed at the window. "Bell loves moonlight like a fairy," he said.

Bell's robe fell to her knees in snowy folds, and she stood like a *petite* Venus rising from the froth. Then brother and sister braided their voices in a simple prayer to Our Father in Heaven. They prayed for kind old Nanny, and for one on the wide sea.

"When will father come home?" asked Bell, for the hundredth time that day.

"It will not be long now. When the boughs of the cherry trees are an inch deep with ice, and the logs crackle in the fire-place—then he will come. Let us go to sleep, and dream of him."

And thus, hand in hand, the two went in to Dream-land—

> The world of Sleep,
> The beautiful old World!
> The dreamy Palestine of pilgrim Thought!
> The Lotus Garden, where the soul may lie
> Lost in elysium, while the music moan
> Of some unearthly river, faintly caught,
> Seems like the whispering of Angels, blown
> Upon æolian harp-strings! And we change
> Into a seeming something that is not!

II.

Ah, yes! with joy the April rain
Thrills nature's breast; but mine with pain
Sigheth: "He will not come again!"

ALBERT LAIGHTON.

II.

THE DEAD HOPE.

Time's Changes—Fall-down Castles—Little Bell Waiting—When will Father Come Home?—Little Bell Weary—What the Sea said—Never more.

Longfellow beautifully asks in Hyperion, "What is Time, but the shadow of the hour-hand on a dial-plate?"

The flowers of the earth and the hearts of men are dial-plates. The shadows coming and going on them are the hour-hands; when a flower fades, or a heart ceases to beat, it is only a weight run down. The whole universe is but one immense time-piece, throbbing with innumerable wheels, heavy with weights, and wearing itself away! Desire is a restless pendulum, one end linked to the heart, and the other pointing downward!

A year had added another link to that chain which stretches through eternity. A year! Battles lost and won: nations in mourning for their dead: ships gone down at sea; and new paths worn to graveyards!

O, for the castles that blow down in a year!

But time fell gently on the inmates of the Old House. The trees and vines were a little larger; and winter had somewhat browned the gables. Bell was paler and more beautiful, and Mortimer was still the same dreamer.

There was a question which haunted the Old House. It was heard in the garden, at "the round window," and on the stair.

"When will father come home?"

The months flew away, like carrier doves, with memories beneath their wings.

"When will father come home?"

And the question was asked again and again, till the little lips and heart of Bell grew weary. Then she folded her hands, and said:

"He will never come!"

Her blue eyes became more dreamy, and her slight form—so very slight—glided about the house. She would listen to the sea. Once she said, "Never more!" and the sea repeated it with a human voice. In the still night she asked,—

"When will father come home?"

"Never more," said the sea—and she heard it through the open window—"Never more!"

She waited, and the months went by.

Was the child Bell the only one in this world waiting?

Who has not some hope at sea? Who has not waited, and watched, and grown weary?

Who has not a question in his heart, to which a low spirit-voice replies:

"Never more!"

III.

I saw our little Gertrude die :
She left off breathing, and no more
I smoothed the pillow beneath her head,
She was more beautiful than before,
Like violets faded were her eyes ;
By this we knew that she was dead !
Through the open window looked the skies
Into the chamber where she lay,
And the wind was like the sound of wings,
As if Angels came to bear her away.

THE GOLDEN LEGEND.

III.

SOUL-LAND.

Autumn and Winter—By the Fireside—Where little Bell is going—Nanny sings about Cloe—Bell reads a Poem—The flight of an Angel—The Funeral—The good Parson—The two Grave-stones.

It was autumn. The wind, with its chilly fingers, picked off the sere leaves, and made mounds of them in the garden walks. The boom of the sea was heavier, and the pale moon fell oftener on stormy waves than in the summer months. Change and decay had come over the face of Earth even as they come over the features of one dead. In woods and hollow places vines lay rotting, and venturesome buds that dared to bloom on the hem of winter; and the winds made wail over the graves of last year's flowers.

Then Winter came—Winter, with its beard of snow—Winter, with its frosty breath and icy fingers, turning everything to pearl. The wind whistled odd tunes down the chimney; the plum-tree brushed against the house, and the hail played a merry tattoo on the window-glass. How the logs blazed in the sitting room!

Bell did not leave her room *now*.

Her fairy foot-steps were never heard tripping, nor her voice vibrating through the entry in some sweet song. She scarcely ever looked out at the window—all was dreary there; besides, she fancied that the wind "looked at her." It was in her arm-chair by the antique fire-place that she was most comfortable. She never wearied of watching the pictured tiles; and one, representing the infant Christ in the manger, was her favorite. There she sat from sunny morn until shadowy twilight, with her delicate hands crossed on her lap, while Mortimer read to her. Sometimes she would fix her large, thoughtful eyes on the fantastic grouping of the embers at her feet, and then she did not hear him reading.

She was wandering in Soul-land.

Heaven's gates are open when the world's are shut. The gates of this world were closing on Bell, and her feet were hesitating at the threshold of Heaven, waiting only for the mystic word to enter!

Very beautiful Bell was. Her perfect soul could not hide itself in the pale, spiritual face. It was visible in her thought and in her eyes. There was a world of tender meaning in her smile. The Angel of Patience had folded her in its wings, and she was meek, holy. As Mortimer sat by her before the evening lamps were lighted, and watched the curious pictures which the flickering drift-wood painted on the walls, he knew that she could not last till the violets came again. She spoke so gently of death, the bridge which spans the darkness between us and Heaven—so softened its dark, dreadful outlines, that it seemed as beautiful as a path of flowers to the boy and Nanny.

"Death," said Bell one day, "is a folding of the hands to sleep. How quiet is death! There is no more yearning, no more waiting in the grave. It comes to me pleasantly, the thought that I shall lie under the daisies, God's daisies! and the robins will sing over me in the trees. Everything is so holy in the churchyard—the moss on the walls, the willows, and the long grass that moves in the wind!"

Poor Nanny tried to hum one of her old ditties about Cloe and her lover; then suddenly she found something interesting at the window. But it would not do. The tears would come, and she knelt down

by Bell's side, and Bell's little hand fell like a strip of white moonlight on Nanny's hair.

"We shall miss you, darling!" sobbed Mortimer.

"At first, won't you?" and Bell smiled, and who knows what sights she saw in the illumined fireplace? Were they pictures of Heaven, little Bell?

"What shall I read to you, pet?" asked Mortimer one morning. She had been prattling for an hour in her wise, child-like way, and was more than usually bright.

"You shall not read to me at all," replied Bell, chirpingly, "but sit at my feet, and *I* will read to you."

She took a slip of paper from her work-basket, and her voice ran along the sweetest lines that the sweetest poet ever wrote. They are from Alfred Tennyson's "May Queen."

"I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,
There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet;

But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,
And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

All in the wild March morning I heard the angels call;
It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all;

The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,
And in the wild March morning I heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear;
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here;

With all my strength I prayed for both, and so I felt resigned,
And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listened in my bed,
And then did something speak to me—I know not what was said;

For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,
And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping; and I said, 'It's not for them: its mine,'
And if it comes three times, I thought, I take it for a sign;

And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,
Then seemed to go right up to Heaven, and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near—I trust it is. I know
The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go;

And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day,
But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away;

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret—
There's many worthier than I would make him happy yet;—

If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife;
But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

Oh look! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow;
He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know;

And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—
Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done,
The voice that now is speaking may be beyond the sun—

To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your breast—
And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest!"

When Bell had finished reading, she took Mortimer's hand in her own.

"I shall not die until the violet comes—the beautiful violet, with its clouded bell!"

March melted into April—the month of tears! Then came blossoming May, and still Bell lingered, like a strain of music so sweet that the echoes will not let it die.

One morning in June, the sun with noiseless feet came creeping into the room—and Bell was dying. Mortimer was telling her of some sea-side walk, when the unseen angel came between them. Bell's voice went from her, her heart grew chilly, and she knew that it was death. The boy did not notice the change; but when her hand lay cold in his, he looked up with fear. He saw her beautiful eyes looking heavenward, and those smiles which wreathe the lips of the young after death—the sunset of smiles.

"Bell! Bell! Bell!"

But she did not hear him.

The viewless spirits of flowers came through the open window into the quiet room; and the winds,

which made the curtains tremble, gently lifted the tresses of the sleeping angel. Then the chiming of village bells came and went in pulses of soft sound. How musical they were that morning! How the robins showered their silvery notes, like rain-drops among the leaves! There was holy life in everything — the lilac-scented atmosphere, the brooks, the grass, and the flowers that lay budding on the bosom of delicious June! And thus it was, in the exquisite spring-time, that the hand of death led little Bell into Soul-land.

One afternoon, the blinds were turned down: not a ray of light stole through them, only the spicy air. There was something solemn stalking in the entries, and all through the house. It seemed as if there was a corpse in every room.

The way the chairs were placed, the darkened parlor, the faded flowers on the mantel-piece, and the brooding silence said it — said that Bell was dead!

Yes! In the little parlor she lay, in her white shroud. Bell? No; it was *not* Bell. It was only the beautiful robe which her spirit in its flight had cast aside!

There was a moving of feet to and fro. Gradu-

ally, the room became full of forms. The village parson stood among them. His hair had the white touch of age, and his heart knew the chastening hand of God. "Exceeding peace" was written on his meek face. He lifted up his soul on the arms of prayer. He spoke of the dead, whose life had been as pure as a new snow. He spoke cheerfully and tenderly, and sometimes smiled, for his

> "Faith was large in Time,
> And that which shapes it to some perfect end."

He had drank at the fountain of God's word; his soul had been refreshed, and his were not the lips to preach the doctrine of an endless wail. He knew that there are many mansions in our Father's house; and he said that Bell was happier there than here. He glanced back upon her infant days, and ran along the various threads of her life, to the moment death disentangled them from the world. "This little one in her shroud," he said, "is an eloquent sermon. She passed through the dark valley without fear; and sits, like Mary, at the feet of our Saviour." Of this life, he said: "It is but an imperfect prelude to the next." Of death: "It is only a brief sleep: some sunny morning we shall wake up with the child Bell, and find ourselves in Heaven!"

The coffin was closed, and the train passed through the gravelled walk.

Then came that dull, heavy sound of earth falling on the coffin-lid, which makes one's heart throb. Did you ever hear it?

When Bell had been a year in Heaven, a plain head-stone was placed over Nanny. She lingered only a little while after her darling. She folded her arms and fell asleep one summer twilight, and never again opened her kind old eyes on *this* world. Age had weakened her frame, and the parting of soul and body was only the severing of a fragile cord.

Mortimer did not remain long in the old house; its light and pleasantness had passed away. The little stock of money which his father had left previous to his last voyage, was exhausted; he could earn nothing in the village. His early dream of the great city came over him again. He yearned for its ceaseless excitement, its grandeur — he never thought of its misery, its sin and pollution. Through the length of one July night he lay awake in bed, while his eyes were like kaleidescopes, taking a thousand arabesque forms and fancies. Toward morning he fell asleep, having built some fall-down

castles in the air. The next day he took a last, lingering look at the old rooms; a last ramble on the sea-shore; he sat an hour under the braided branches of the cherry trees, gave a parting look at the white caps of the sea, and turned his eyes to the city in the dim distance—the great city-ocean, with no one to point out to him its sunken reefs, its quicksands, and maelstroms.

Next to Bell's grave he placed a simple tablet to the memory of his father.

"This sod does not enfold him," said Mortimer to himself; "but it will be pleasant for me to think, when I am far away, that their names are near together."

So he left them in the quiet churchyard at Ivyton—left them sleeping among the thick musk-roses, in the warm sunshine; and the same berylline moss was creeping over the two mounds. One headstone said "Little Bell," and the other:

SACRED

TO THE MEMORY

OF

OUR FATHER,

LOST AT SEA,

18—.

IV.

The Almighty Dollar.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

The age is dull and mean. Men creep,
Not walk; with blood too pale and tame
To pay the debt they owe to shame;
Buy cheap, sell dear; eat, drink, and sleep
Down-pillowed, deaf to moaning want;
Pay tithes for soul-insurance; keep
Six days to Mammon, one to Cant.

J. G. WHITTIER.

Every one is as God made him, and oftentimes
A great deal worse.

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES.

IV.

A FEW SPECIMENS OF HUMANITY.

Down Town—Messrs. Flint & Snarle—Tim, the Office Boy, and the pale Book-Keeper—The Escritoire—The Purloined Package—Mr. Flint goes Home—Midnight—Miss Daisy Snarle—The Poor Author.

In one of those thousand and one vein-like streets which cross and recross the mercantile heart of Gotham, is situated a red brick edifice, which, like the beggar who solicits your charity in the Park, has seen better days.

In the time of our Knickerbocker sires, it was an aristocratic dwelling fronting on a fashionable street, and "Jeems," in green livery, opened the hall door. The street was a quiet, orderly street in those days—a certain air of conscious respectability hung about it. Sometimes a private cabriolet rolled augustly along; and of summer evenings the

city beaux, with extraordinary shoe-buckles, might have been seen promenading the grass-fringed sidewalks. To-day it is a miasmatic, miserable, muddy thoroughfare. Your ears are startled by the "Extray 'rival of the 'Rabia," and the omnibuses dash through the little confined street with a perfect madness. Instead of the white-kided, be-ruffled gallants of Eld, you meet a hurrying throng of pale, anxious faces, with tare, tret and speculation in their eyes.

It is a business street, for Mammon has banished Fashion to the golden precincts of Fifth Avenue. The green of Jeems' livery is, like himself, invisible. He has departed this life—gone, like Hiawatha, to the Land of the Hereafter—to the land of spirits, where we can conceive him to be in his element; but he has a "town residence" in an obscure graveyard, with his name and "recommendation" on a stone door-plate. His mundane superiors are reclining beneath the shadow of St. Paul's steeple, where they are regaled with some delectable music if you would only think so) from the balcony of (the Museum opposite, and have the combined benefit of Barnum's scenic-artist and the Drummond light.

The massive door-plate, and highly polished, distroted knocker, no longer grace the oaken panels of number 85; but a republican sign over the fam-

ily-looking door-way tells you that "the front room, second floor," is occupied by Messrs. Flint & Snarle. After passing up a flight of broad, uncarpeted stairs, you again see the name of that respectable firm painted on a light of ground glass set in the office door. Once on the other side of that threshold, you breathe mercantile air. There have been so many brain-trying interest calculations worked out on those high desks, that the very atmosphere, figuratively speaking, is mathematical.

The sign should not read Flint & Snarle, for Snarle has been dead six months, and it is not pleasant to contemplate a name without an owner—it is not to every one, but Mr. Flint likes to read the sign, and think that Snarle *is* dead. He was the reverse of Flint, and that his name should have been *Snarle* at all is odd, for in life he was the quintessence of quietness, and the oil of good nature. But Flint is well named; he is chalcedony at heart. Nobody says this, but everybody knows it. Nell, the pretty match-girl, who sells her wares in Wall-street, never approaches him, nor the newsboys; and blind men, with sagacious, half-fed dogs, steer clear of him by instinct. *He* doesn't tolerate paupers, and Italian hand-organs with monkey accompaniments—not he.

The man who has not as much money as the

surviving senior of Flint & Snarle, is a dog—in Flint's distinguished estimation. His God is not that divine Presence, whose thought

> "Shaped the world,
> And laid it in the sunbeams."

Flint's God is Gold.—

> "Gold! Gold! Gold! Gold!
> Bright and yellow, hard and cold,
> Molten, graven, hammered and rolled;
> Heavy to get, and light to hold;
> Hoarded, bartered, bought and sold;
> Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled;
> Spurned by the young, but hugged by the old
> To the very verge of the church-yard mould;
> Price of many a crime untold:
> Gold! Gold! Gold! Gold!"

Flint is about fifty-three years of age; but if you could forget his gray hair, and look only at those small, piercing black eyes, you would hardly think him forty. His black dress-coat is buttoned around his somewhat attenuated form, and he wears a stiff white cravat because it looks religious. In this respect, and perhaps in others, you will find Flint's prototype on every corner—people who look religious, if religion can be associated with the aspect of an undertaker.

It is Monday morning.

Mr. Flint sits in his private office reading the letters. There is a window cut in the wall, and he glances through it now and then, eyeing the book-keeper as if the poor careworn fellow were making false entries. On a high consumptive-looking stool sits the office boy, filing away answered letters and sundry bills paid. The stool seems so high and the boy so small, that he at once suggests some one occupying a dangerous position—at a mast-head or on the golden ball of a church-steeple. For thus risking his life, he receives "thirty dollars per year, *and* clothing." We like to have forgotten that. The said clothing consists of one white cravat full of hinges, and a dilapidated coat, twelve sizes too large for him, his widowed mother supplying the deficiency.

Save the monotonous ticking of a thick-set, croupy clock, and the nervous scratching of pens, not a sound is heard.

Mr. Flint in deep thought, with his thumbs lost in the arm-holes of a white vest, paces up and down his limited sanctum, just as a thoughtful-eyed, velvet-mouthed leopard walks its confined cage, only waiting for a chance to put its paws on somebody. The stool on which the boy is sitting is a rickety concern, and its creakings annoy Mr. Flint, who comes out, and looks over the orphan's

shoulder. If his lynx eyes discover a document incorrectly filed, he pinches the delinquent's ears, till he (the orphan) is as red in the face as an August sunset. Mr. Flint chuckles when he gets back to his desk, and seems to enjoy it immensely, for he drums out an exhilarating dead march with his long, wiry fingers on the cover of the letter-book. The pale book-keeper—his hair and eyes are darker than when we first saw him sitting with little Bell at "the round window" in the Old House—continues to write assiduously; and the orphan thinks that he hears fire-bells, his ears ring so.

He's an unfortunate atom of humanity, that office-boy. He was never young. He never passed through the degrading cycles of infancy—never had any marbles or hoops: *his* limbs were never ignominiously confined by those "triangular arrangements" incidental to babyhood. At five, when other children are bumping their heads over steep stairs, he smoked cinnamon segars, and was a precocious, astute little villain at seven. For thirty-six months he folded books for Harper & Brothers, and at the advanced age of ten years three months, was bound over to the tender mercies of Flint & Snarle for "thirty dollars per year *and* clothing, (so the indentures read;) but as he is charged with all the inkstands demolished during the term, and one

gross of imaginary lead pencils, he generally has about twenty-five dollars to his credit on the 1st of January, which Flint generously offers to keep for him at four per cent. interest, and which offer the ungrateful orphan "firmly but respectfully" declines.

"Mortimer!" cries Mr. Flint, in a quick, snarly voice from the inner office.

The book-keeper lays down the pen which he has just dipped in the ink, and disappears in the little room. Mr. Flint is turning over the leaves of the invoice book.

"In thirteen pages there are no less than two blots and five erasures. You have grown careless in your penmanship lately;" and Mr. Flint closes the book with a report like that of a pocket-pistol, and opens it again. One would suppose the office-boy to be shot directly through the heart; but he survives, and is attacked with a wonderful fit of industry.

"Do you write in your sleep?" inquires Mr. Flint, with a quiet insolence.

Mortimer thinks how often he has toiled over those same pages at hours when he should have been sleeping—hours taken from his life. But he makes no reply. He only bites his lips, and lets his eyes flash. Suddenly a thought strikes him, and, bending over Mr. Flint's shoulder, as if to examine

more closely his careless chirography, he takes a small key from an open drawer in the *escritoire* behind him, and drops it into his vest-pocket. After receiving a petulant reprimand, Mortimer returns to his desk; and again that weary, weary pen scratches over the paper.

After the bank deposit is made up, and Mr. Flint looks over the bill-book, and startles the orphan from a state of semi-somnolency, he goes on 'Change. He is no sooner out, than Mortimer throws Tim a bit of silver coin.

"Get some apples for yourself, Tim."

Tim (he's small of his age) slides down from the high stool with agility, while his two eyes look like interrogation points. He is wondering at this sudden outbreak of munificence, for though "Mr. Mortimer" always had a kind word for Tim, and tried to extricate him from the web of mistakes which Tim was forever spinning around himself, yet Tim never knew him to come down with the "block tin" before, as he eloquently expressed it; and he looks at Mortimer all the time he is getting his cap, and pauses a moment at the door to see if he doesn't repent.

When Tim's feet cease sounding on the stairs, Mortimer goes into the back office, and with the key which he had taken from the drawer, unlocks

a small iron hand-safe. His trembling fingers turn over package after package; at last he finds one which seems to be the object of his search. This he hastily conceals in the bosom of his coat. After carefully re-locking the safe, he approaches the *escritoire* to return the purloined key, but to his dismay he finds the drawer locked. The one above it, however, is unfastened. Drawing this out, he places the key in its right compartment.

Mortimer, in searching for the paper which he has hidden in his bosom, had removed several others from the safe; but in his nervousness he had neglected to replace a small morocco case. He discovers his negligence, and hears foot-falls on the stairs at the same moment. There is no time to re-open the chest: he wraps the case in his handkerchief, and resumes his place at the desk.

Tim returns munching the remains of a gigantic apple, and bearing about him a convicting smell of peanuts. Suddenly Mr. Flint enters, and Tim is necessitated to swallow the core of his russet without that usual preparatory mastication which nature's kindly law suggests. Mr. Flint has made a capital bargain on 'Change, and his face is lighted up with a smile, if fancy can coax such an expression into one. It looks like a gas-light in an undertaker's window.

It is five o'clock. Mr. Flint goes home to doze over a diminutive glass of sherry. He holds it up between his eyes and the light, smiling to see the liquid jewels, and wishes that they were real rubies. Flint! they are red tears, and not jewels which glisten in your glass, for you crushed the poor, and took advantage of the unfortunate to buy this pleasant blood which pulses in your brittle chalice!

That night he thought of a pair of blue, innocent eyes which once looked pleadingly in his—of two tiny arms that were once wound fondly around his neck. Those eyes haunted him into the misty realm of dreams, where myriads of little arms were stretched out to him; and he turned restlessly on his pillow. Ah, Flint, there is an invisible and powerful spirit in the heart of every man that *will* speak. It whispers to the criminal in his cell; and the downy pillows and sumptuous drapery around the couch of Wealth cannot keep it away at midnight.

There is not a house but has its skeleton. There is a ghastly one in Flint's.

The silvery lips in Trinity steeple chime the hour of eleven; St. Paul's catch it up, and hosts of belfrys toss the hour to and fro like a shuttle-cork. Then the goblin bells hush themselves to sleep again in their dizzy nests, murmuring, murmuring!—and

the pen of the pale book-keeper keeps time with the ticking of the office time-piece.

It is nearly twelve o'clock when he reaches the door of a common two-story house in Marion-street. The door is opened before he can turn the bolt with his night-key, and the whitest possible little hand presses his. He draws it within his own, and places his arm around the daintiest little waist that ever submitted to the operation. Then the two enter the front parlor, where the dim light falls on Mortimer and a beautiful girl on the verge of womanhood. She looks into his face, and his lips touch a tress of chestnut hair which has fallen over his shoulder.

"You are very pale. Have you been unwell to-day?"

"No, Daisy," and he bends down and kisses her.

"Why do you persist in sitting up for me? I shall scold if you spoil your cheeks. Kiss me, Daisy."

The girl pouts, and declares she won't, as she coquettishly twines her arms around his neck, and Mortimer has such a kiss as all Flint's bank stock could not buy him—a pure, earnest kiss. He was rich, poor in the world's eye, richer than Flint, with his corpulent money bags, God pity him!

They sit a long while without speaking. Mortimer breaks the silence.

"We are very poor, Daisy."

"Yes, but happy."

"Sometimes. To-night I am not; I am weary of this daily toiling. The world is not a workshop to wear out souls in. Man has perverted its use. Life, and thought, and brain, are but crucibles to smelt gold in. Nobleness is made the slave of avarice, just as a pure stream is taught to turn a mill-wheel and become foul and muddied. The rich are scornful, and the poor sorrowful. O, Daisy, such things should not be! My heart beats when I think how poorly you and your mother are living."

"O, how much we owe you, Mortimer! you are selling your life for us. From morning till night, day after day, you have been our slave. Poor, dear Mortimer, how can we thank you? We can only give you love and prayers. You will not let me help you. Last night, when you found me embroidering a collar, a bit of work which Mrs. Potiphar had kindly given me, you pleasantly cut it in pieces with your pen-knife, and then pawned your gold pencil to pay for ruining Mrs. Potiphar's muslin—too proud to have me work!"

"Why will you pain me, darling? I was complaining for others, not myself. I do not toil as

thousands do. I am impulsive and irascible, and do not mean all I say. I am ungrateful; my heart should be full of gratitude to-night, for the cloud which has hung over me the last six months has shown its silver lining."

"What do you mean?" cries Daisy.

"Do you know that you are an heiress?" asks Mortimer, gaily.

Daisy laughs at the idea, and mockingly says, "Yes."

"An heiress to a good name, Daisy! which is better than purple, and linen, and fine gold."

Daisy looks mystified, but forbears to question him, for he complains of sleep. The lovers part at the head of the stairs. Mortimer, on reaching his room, draws a paper from his bosom; he weeps over it, reads it again and again; then he holds it in the flame of a candle. When the ashes have fallen at his feet, he exclaims:

"I have kept my promise, Harvey Snarle! Peace to your memory!"

From a writing-desk in a corner of the room he takes a pile of manuscript, and weary as he is, adds several pages to it. The dream of his boyhood has grown with him—that delightful dream of authorship! How this will-o'-the-wisp of the brain entices one into mental fogs! How it coaxes and

pets one, cheats and ruins one! And so that appalling pile of closely-written manuscript is Mortimer's romance? Wasted hours and wasted thought —who would buy or read it?

A down-town clock strikes the hour of two so gently, that it sounds like the tinkling of sheep-bells coming through the misty twilight air from the green meadows. With which felicitous simile we will give our hero a little sleep, after having kept him up two hours after midnight.

Slumber touches his eyelids gently; but Daisy lies awake for hours; at last, falling into a trouble sleep, she dreams that she is an heiress.

Oh, Daisy Sarle!

V.

The bitter cups of Death are mixed,
And we must drink and drink again.

R. H. Stoddard.

V.

DAISY SNARLE.

Sunday Morning—Harvey Snarle and Mortimer—A Tale of Sorrow—The Snow-child—Mortimer takes Daisy's hand —Snarle's death.

Six months previous to the commencement of the last chapter, Mr. Harvey Snarle lay dying, slowly, in a front room of the little house in Marion-street.

It was Sunday morning.

The church bells were ringing — speaking with musical lips to "ye goode folk," and chiming a sermon to the pomp and pride of the city. As Mortimer sat by the window, the houses opposite melted before his vision; and again he saw the old homestead buried in a world of leaves—heard the lapping of the sea, and a pleasant chime of bells from the humble church at Ivytown. And

more beautiful than all, was a child with clouds of golden hair, wandering up and down the sea-shore.

"Mortimer?" said the sick man.

Then the dream melted, and the common-looking brick buildings came back again.

"The doctor thought I could not live?" said the man, inquiringly.

"He thought there was little hope," replied Mortimer. "But doctors are not fortune-tellers," he added, cheerfully.

"I feel that he is right—little hope. Where is Daisy?"

"She has lain down for a moment. Shall I call her?"

"Wearied! Poor angel; she watched me last night. I did not sleep much. I closed my eyes, and she smiled to think that I was slumbering quietly. No; do not call her."

After a pause, the sick man said:

"Wet my lips, I have something to tell you."

Mortimer moistened his feverish lips, and sat on the bed-side.

"It comes over me," said the consumptive.

"What? That pain?"

"No; my life. There is something drearier than death in the world."

"Sometimes life," thought Mortimer, half aloud

The sick man looked at him.

"Why did you say that?"

"I thought it. Life is a bitter gift sometimes. An ambition or a passion possess us, flatters and mocks us. Death is not so dreary a thing as life then."

"He felt that."

"Who?"

"The devil."

"His mind is wandering," murmured Mortimer—"wandering."

"It isn't," said Snarle, slowly. "A passion, a love, made Flint's life bitter."

"Flint! Did he ever love anything but gold?"

"Yes; but it was long ago! We are cousins. We were schoolmates and friends, sharing our boyish sports and troubles with that confiding friendship which leaves us in our teens. We lived together. I can see the old white frame house at Hampton Falls!" and the man passed his emaciated hand over his eyes, as if to wipe out some unpleasant picture. "A niece of my father's came to spend a winter with us. Young men's thoughts run to love. I could but love her, she was so beautiful and good; and while she did a thousand kind things to win my affection, she took a strange aversion to my cousin Flint, who grew rude and impetuous. We were

married. But long before that, Flint packed up his little trunk, and, without a word of farewell, left us one night for a neighboring city. Years went by, and from time to time tidings reached us of his prosperity and growing wealth. We were proud of his industry, and thought of him kindly. We, too, were prospering. But the tide of our fortune changed. My father's affairs and mine became complicated. He died, and the farm was sold. One day I stood at Flint's office door, and asked for employment. Evil day! better for me if I had toiled in the fields from morning till night, wringing a reluctant livelihood from the earth, which is even more human than Flint. Wet my lips, boy, and come near to me, that I may tell you how I became his slave; softly, so the air may not hear me."

Mortimer drew nearer to him.

"It was a hard winter for the poor. My darling wife was suffering from the mere want of proper medicines and food. I asked Flint for a little more than the pitiable salary which he allowed me. He smiled, and said that I was extravagant. We had not clothes enough to shield us from the cold! I told him that my wife was sick; and he replied, bitterly, 'poor men should not have wives.' Wet my lips again. Can you love me, boy, after what I shall tell you? I forged a check for a trivial

amount!" and Snarle's voice sunk to a hoarse whisper. "Can you love me?"

"Can I love you?" cried Mortimer. He could not see the sick man for his tears. "Can I forget all your kindness. Years ago, when I was a mere child, toiling early and late in Flint's office, did you not take me to your home, a poor hope-broken boy? Have I not grown up with Daisy, like your own child? Not love you?"

Mortimer laid his face on the same pillow with the sick man's.

"I was not sent to prison," continued Snarle, with a shudder; "only my own mind, and soul, and actions were prisoners. I was Flint's! Flint owned me! That little paper which he guards so carefully is the title-deed. O, Mortimer, as you hold my memory dear, destroy that paper—tear it, burn it, trample it out of the world!"

With these words Snarle sank back upon the pillow, from which he had half risen. He went on speaking in a lower tone:

"I have suffered so much that I am sure God will forgive me. Never let the world know—never let my wife and Daisy know that I was a ——"

"O, I will promise you, dear father," cried Mortimer, before he could finish the dreadful word. "I will destroy the paper, though twenty Flints guarded

it. The man who steals a loaf of bread for famishing lips, is not such a criminal in God's sight as he who steals a million times its value by *law* to feed his avarice. Think no more of it. The angel who records in his book, has written a hundred good deeds over that unfortunate one. The world's frown is not God's frown, and His heart is open when man's is barred with unforgiveness."

"Thank you, thank you," said Snarle, brightening up a little. "Your words give me comfort. I have not much more to tell. Flint took me into the firm, but I was the same slave. I worked, and worked, and the reapings were his. You have seen it—you know it. And this was his revenge. His wounded love and pride have wrecked themselves on me. He has never crossed the threshold of our door—never laid his eyes on my wife since the time when we were thoughtless boys together. O, how cruel he has been to me! Evening after evening, in midwinter, he has made me bring the last editions of the *Express* to his house, and never asked me in!"

This was said with such a ludicrous expression, that Mortimer would have laughed if it had been anybody but poor Snarle. Exhausted with talking, the sick man sank into a quiet slumber.

Mortimer sat by his bed-side for an hour, watching the change of expressions in the sleeper's face

—the shadow of his dreams coming and going! Then his head drooped upon his bosom, and he slept so soundly that he did not know that Daisy came in the room, and stood beside him, looking in his face with her fond, quiet eyes.

When he awoke, one long dark shadow from the houses opposite slanted into the apartment.

Snarle was looking at him.

"I have been asleep," said Snarle, "and have had such pleasant thoughts that it is painful to find myself in this poor little world again. Ah, me, what will wife and Daisy do in it all alone?"

"Not alone," said Mortimer. "I will watch over them—love them." Then, after a pause: "Father, I love Daisy—I would make her my wife."

"Ah, I wished that; but I did not think it;" and Snarle paused a moment. "Have you told Daisy so?"

"Yes—but ——"

"Well," said Snarle, waiting.

"But she does not love me; and that is why I said love would make life bitter."

"Perhaps she does."

"No."

"What did Daisy say?"

"She said there were clouds in the morning of her life—(these were her own words)—which had

no sunshine in them. Then she called me brother and kissed me, and told me that I must never think of her as my wife. She would be my sister always. And when I speak to her of this, she turns away or hums a pleasant air to mock me."

"She is not our child, Mortimer."

"What?"

"No, I am not wandering," said Snarle, in reply to Mortimer's look. "She is not our child. We adopted her under strange circumstances. I have not told you this before. Daisy did not wish me to; but it is right that you should know it now. Sit nearer to me."

Mortimer obeyed mechanically.

"One stormy night we were sitting, my wife and I, in the room below. I remember as if it were yesterday, how the wind slammed the window-blinds, and blew out the street-lamps. It was just a year ago that night we lost our little Maye, and we were very sad. We sat in silence, while without the storm increased. The hail and snow dashed against the window-panes, and down the chimney. Every now and then the wind lulled, and everything was still."

Heaven knows why Mr. Snarle ceased speaking just then; but he did, and seemed lost in reverie.

"What was I saying?"

"You were speaking of the storm."

"Yes, yes. It was in one of those pauses of the wind that we heard a low sob under our windows. We did not heed it at first, for sometimes a storm moans like a human voice. It came again so distinctly as to leave no doubt. I opened the hall-door, and groped about in the snow. When I returned to the sitting-room, I held little Daisy in my arms. She was no larger than our Maye who died—our little three-year-old. The child was half frozen, and nothing but a coarse cloak thrown over her night-dress, had saved her from perishing. I reported the circumstance at the police-station, but such things were of too common occurrence to excite much interest. Weeks passed, and then months, and no one answered the advertisements. At last we had learned to love the child so dearly, that we dreaded the thought of parting with it. I asked and obtained permission to adopt the pet, and so Daisy became ours. She is very proud, and the mystery of her birth troubles her; and this——"

Before Snarle could finish the sentence, Daisy herself opened the room door, and came tripping up to the bed-side.

Mortimer took her hand very quietly.

"Daisy," he said, "I love you."

Daisy hid her face in the pillow.

"He has told me everything, and I love you, Daisy!"

Daisy looked up with the tears and sunshine of April in her eyes.

"Do you love me?" he asked.

The girl was silent for a moment, then a sweet little "yes" budded on her lips.

Then Mortimer kissed Daisy, and poor Snarle died happy; for that evening his life-stream ebbed with the tide, and mingled with that ocean which is forever and forever.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

VI.

A lone ship sailing on the sea:
Before the north 'twas driven like a cloud;
High on the poop a man sat mournfully:
The wind was whistling through mast and shroud,
And to the whistling wind thus did he sing aloud.

SMITH'S "BARBARA."

VI.

THE PHANTOM AT SEA.

A Storm in the Tropics—The Lone Ship—The Man at the Wheel—How he sang strange Songs—The Apparition—The Drifting Bark.

The blood-red sun had gone down into the Atlantic. Faint purple streaks streamed up the western horizon, like the fingers of some great shadowy hand clutching at the world.

Huge masses of dark, agate-looking clouds were gathering in the zenith, and the heavy, close atmosphere told the coming of a storm. Now and then the snaky lightning darted across the heavens and coiled itself away in a cloud.

A lone ship stood almost motionless in the twilight.

The sails were close-reefed. Here and there on the forecastle were groups of lazy-looking seamen; and a man walked the quarter-deck, glancing anxiously aloft. The sea was as smooth as a mirror, and that dreadful stillness was in the air which so often preludes a terrific storm in the tropics. A rumbling was heard in the sky like the sound of distant artillery, or heavy bodies of water falling from immense heights.

Then the surface of the sea was broken by mimic waves tipped with froth, and the vast expanse seemed like a prairie in a snow fall.

The lightning became more frequent and vivid, and the thunder seemed breaking on the very top-masts of the vessel. Then the starless night sunk down on the ocean, and the sea raved in the gathering darkness. The storm was at its height: the wind,

"Through unseen sluices of the air,"

tore the shrouds to strings, and bent the dizzy, tapering masts till they threatened to snap. But the bark bore bravely through it, while the huge waves seemed bearing her down to those coral labyrinths, where nothing goes

"But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange."

The thunder sent forth peal after peal, and the heaven was like "a looming bastion fringed with fire." On through the slanting rain sped the ship, creaking and groaning, with its ribs warped and its great oaken spine trembling. The sailors on deck clung to the bulwarks; and below not a soul could sleep, for the thunder and the creaking of cordage filled their ears.

At midnight the storm abated; but the sea still ran dangerously high, and the wind sobbed through the rigging mournfully. The heaven was spangled with tremulous stars, and at the horizon the clouds hung down in gossamer folds—God's robe trailing in the sea!

Toward morning the waves grew suddenly calm, as if they had again heard that voice which of old said, "Peace, be still!" There was no one above decks, save the man at the wheel, who ever and anon muttered to himself, or hummed bits of poetry. He was a man in the mellow of life, in the Indian summer of manhood, which comes a little while before one falls "into the sere and yellow leaf." Once he must have been eminently handsome; but there were furrows on his intellectual forehead not traced by time's fingers. His eyes were peculiarly wild and restless.

The slightest tinge of red fringed the East, and

as the man watched it grow deeper and deeper, he sang snatches of those odd sea-songs which Shakspeare scatters through his plays:

"The master, the swabber, the boatswain and I,
The gunner and his mate,
Loved Mall, Meg, and Marian and Margary,
But none of us cared for Kate.
For she had a tongue with a twang,
Would cry to a sailor, go hang!
She loved not the savor of tar or of pitch,—
Then to sea, boys, and let her go hang!"

Then his sonorous voice rang out these quaint words to the night:

"Full fathom five thy father lies:
Of his bones are coral made:
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade—"

He abruptly broke off, and commenced:

"Break, break, break
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O, well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on,
To the haven under the hill;
But oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me."

Suddenly he paused, while a paleness like death overspread his face; the spokes of the wheel slipped from his hold, and he called for help; but the wind went moaning through the shrouds, and drowned his voice. The sea moaned and the ship drifted with the wind.

"It comes again!" he cried; "the graveyard face! Go! I cannot bear those sad, reproachful eyes—those arms outstretched, asking mercy! Send foul fiends to torture me, and make my dreams hideous nightmares, but not this beautiful form to mock me with its purity, and kill me with its mild reproach. It has gone. But it will come again! It steals on me in the awful hours of night, when the air seems supernatural, and the mind is accessible to fear. It stood by my hammock last night; my conscious soul looked through my closed eyelids, and sleep felt its dreadful presence. If it comes again I will throw myself into the sea! Hush!" he whispered,

"it stands by the cabin door, so pale! so pale! Come not near me, pensive ghost. Give me help, somebody! help! help!"

He sunk down by the wheel.

The stars, at the approach of morning, had grown as white as pond-lilies, and the wind had died away; but the same moan came up from the sea. On in the morning twilight drifted the ship for an hour, without a helmsman, save that unseen hand which guides all things—which balances with equal love and tenderness a dew-drop or a world.

VII.

I was not always a man of woe.

WALTER SCOTT.

VII.

IN WHICH THERE IS A MADMAN.

Mr. Flint sips vino d'oro—The Stranger—The Letter—Mr. Flint Outwitted—Mr. Flint's Photograph—The Madman's Story—The wrecked Soul—How Mr. Flint is troubled by his Conscience, and dreams of a Pair of Eyes.

THE same night on which Mortimer was writing in the books of Flint & Snarle, Mr. Flint sat in the library of his bachelor home, sipping a glass of *vino d'oro;* and as the bells of Trinity Church fell faintly on his ear, he drew a massive gold watch from his fob, and, patting it complacently on the back, scrutinized its face as if he would look it out of countenance. Then he yawned a couple of times and thought of bed.

"There's a gintleman without, sur," said Michel, putting his comical head in at the library door,

"there's a gintleman without, sur," and he emphasized the 'gintleman.'

"What sort of a person, Michel?"

"A very quare one indade. 'Is Mr. Flint in?' sez he. 'He is sur,' sez I. 'I want to see him,' sez he. 'Your kard, sur,' sez I. He stared at me a minit, and laughed. Then, sez he, without the least riverence for your worship, 'Give this to *owld Flint!*" And Michel, exploding with laughter, handed Flint a knave of clubs very much soiled.

"Michel!" said Mr. Flint, drawing himself up to his full altitude, "kick him down the steps!"

"Thanks!" said a voice directly behind Michel, who had retreated to the doorway. The voice was so near and unexpected that Michel's crisp hair stood on end with fright.

The door was thrown wide open, and a fine looking man, with the bearing of a sailor, stood between them. Mr. Flint turned as white as his immaculate shirt-bosom; and Michel, whose love of fun had got the better of his scare, regarded the intruder with a quizzical, inquiring air, peculiarly Irish.

"Michel," said Mr. Flint, "you may go."

That gentleman, not expecting such an order, hesitated.

"Yes, sur."

"Michel," said the stranger, "your master speaks to you."

"Sure I heard him, sur."

Michel left the room and carefully closed the door after him; but Flint, who knew his inquiring proclivities, opened it suddenly, and found Michel on all fours with his ear to the key-hole. The door was opened so unexpectedly that the listener did not discover the fact for the space of ten seconds. When he looked up and beheld his master, the intense expression of his face was superbly ludicrous. To say that he shot to the subterranean regions of the kitchen like a flash of lightning, does not border on fiction.

The man laughed—it was a low, peculiar laugh, sadder than some men's tears.

"Flint!"

"Well."

"Are you glad to see me?" and the man repeated his laugh.

"No: you are a devil!"

"I have been away three years, as I promised you."

"Well, what do you want?"

"Money."

"Have I ever seen you when you did not?"

"No, Flint, you never did. But you saw me once when I had an unstained soul—when I could have looked up to Heaven and said, 'I am poor, Father, but I am honest.' Have you enough

money to pay for a lost soul? Oh Flint, I am a wrecked man! If it had only been murder—if I had killed *a man* in the heat of passion—but a poor innocent babe in the cold snow! The child! the little babe! Ah, Flint, I never see the white snow coming down but I think of it. Those eyes are always with me. They follow me out to sea. They haunt me in the long watches. One night, when a storm had torn our rigging to tatters, and we heard the breakers on the lee-shore, I saw her standing by the binnacle light, and, so help me Heaven! she had grown to be a woman. I fainted at the wheel. You heard of the shipwreck. How could a ship keep clear of the rocks and the helmsman in a trance? Forty souls went down, down! Hist! who said that? Not I. No, not I! I am a maniac!"

"Don't go on that way," pleaded Snarle, giving uneasy looks toward the door, which he regretted having locked.

"Why?"

"It is not pleasant."

"What isn't?"

"Your eyes—your words. What can I do for you?"

The man's excitement lulled for a moment. He replied, carelessly:

"I am not a chameleon; I cannot live on air; I can earn no money. The elements are against me—storms and shipwrecks follow me.....I have not found him yet," he said, abruptly.

"Who?"

"My boy."

Flint turned aside his head, and laughed quietly.

"I am tired of searching for him," said the man, sorrowfully. "I am not going to sea any more." After a pause—"I wish to live among the fishermen off Nantucket. You ask me what I want?"

"Yes."

"I want two or three hundred dollars to fit up a fishing-smack. Give me this, and I will not trouble you again. God knows I don't want to look on your face!"

"And the letter—will you give me the letter?"

"Yes; when I take the money."

The man drew from his bosom several letters, and selected one more worn and crumpled than the rest.

Flint's eyes fed upon it.

"Of course," said Flint, "I have not such an amount in the house. I have a hundred dollars up stairs, and will give you a check for the remainder. Will that do?"

"No and yes; but get the money, and I'll see."

Flint left him alone. From a safe in his bed-

chamber he took a small bag of gold, and caressed it for a moment very much as one's grandmother would a pet cat; then he filled up a check, and called Michel.

"Run to the police station, Michel, and tell Captain L.——to send me three or four men."

Michel shot down stairs, and his master followed him leisurely, patting the gold-bag lovingly at every other step.

"Does he think," said Flint's visitor to himself, as the library door closed—"*can* he think I would part with this paper? He, so full of worldly shrewdness, so simple?"

After awhile the door opened.

"There!" gasped Flint, placing the bag on the table before the man; "the letter! the letter!"

The stranger carelessly threw a rumpled paper toward Flint, who grasped it convulsively. His hand touched a bell-rope, and before the bell had ceased tinkling, a heavy measured tramp came through the entry. Four policemen entered the room in single file, with Michel behind them making comical efforts to keep step.

"Arrest him!" cried Flint, hoarse with passion and triumph, "he has extorted money from me!"

"Flint," said the man, walking toward him, "you know that's a lie!"

Mr. Flint retreated behind the policeman.

"This person," he cried, "is a stranger to me; he forced his way into my house and has threatened my life. Arrest him quickly, for he is no doubt armed!"

"Gentlemen," said the stranger, turning to the officers, "Mr. Flint, I fear, has given you useless trouble. Michel, more glasses!"

At this, that astonished individual went off like a rocket.

"For the love you bear your good name," Mr. Flint, he continued, "look at the paper which you so innocently put in your pocket."

An idea struck Flint, which caused him to turn pale. He tore open the letter; but it was not the one for which he would have given half his fortune. Oh! sagacious, wily, clear-sighted Mr. Flint!

"You had better tell these gentlemen that you have made a mistake, Flint. But, before they go, they must have a glass of wine."

Michel had failed to appear with the extra glasses; but the want of them was elegantly supplied by three silver goblets which stood on the *beaufait*. And poor, collapsed Flint! he could only bid the officers go, with a wave of his hand.

They were alone.

The sailor, with a scornful curl in his lip, stood by the chair of the merchant, whose dejected counte-

nance, taken in connection with his white cravat, was delightfully comical.

"Flint," commenced the man, "your verdancy is refreshing. Your sweet and child-like simplicity is like a draught of your old wine — it's rare, it's rare."

If anything touched Flint, it was sarcasm. He stood in dread of ridicule, as most men do whose foibles and vices deserve lashing.

"Edward Walters!" he cried, springing to his feet "you have outwitted me. Well, you are a knave; it is your pride to be one. Your companions will shout to-night, in some obscure den of this city, as you tell them of your ingenuity, and you will be a hero among ——"

"Stop, John Flint! For sixteen years to-night my life has been as pure as a child's. The vices of passion and avarice have not touched me. I have borne a sorrow in my heart which shrunk instinctively from sin. During these years I have been poor, very poor." The man paused. "There is a link lost somewhere in my life—was I an age in a madhouse? Let it go. I have loved my fellow-man; I have lingered at the hammock of a sick mess-mate, and closed his eyes kindly when he died; I have spoken words of cheer when my heart was bitterness. I do not say this boastfully, for God's

eyes are upon us all. I have done these things to atone for the one great sin of my life, which has stalked through memory like a plague. John Flint, I have had the misfortune to know you for twenty years, and during that time you never have, to my knowledge, performed a single act worthy of being remembered. You have a narrow, malicious mind; you have been tyrannical when you should have been generous; you have been the devil's emissary under the cant of religion. You call Jesus master, but you crucify him daily! There is your photograph, John Flint!"

"You flatter me," remarked that personage, sarcastically; "but go on."

"It is seldom that a rich man has the truth spoken to him plainly—the poor man hears it often enough. Consider yourself favored. You have called me a knave. I will draw some pictures, and I wish you to look at them:

"Many years ago, a seafaring man who had just lost his ship in which his little fortune had been invested, returned to this city sick at heart, and weak from a wound which he had received in the wreck. He had battled many a year against misfortune, and his utmost exertions had barely found bread for his children. He owed money to a heartless and exacting man. He stood before his creditor and said,

'I am beggared, but I will work for you.' The merchant replied, 'Come to my house to-night, and I will find means by which this debt can be liquidated.' The sailor expected reproaches and hard words; so he was surprised at the softness of this speech, and his heart was full of gratitude.

"That night he sat in the parlor of the merchant, who plied him with rare wines, until his mind went from him. Then he made a proposal to the sailor, who, if he had had his senses, would have felled him to the floor. The merchant had been appointed guardian to a motherless babe, which his brother, dying, begged him to love and educate. His ship on the sea, and the bales of merchandize in his warehouses, were not enough to feed his hungry avarice. He needs must have the little inheritance of the babe. Well, while he was speaking, making artful pictures in the eyes of his drugged dupe, the child ran into the room, and twined her arms around the neck of him who should have worshiped her. But he coldly unclasped the little hands and pushed her from him. John Flint, when that man, on Judgment Day, shall cringe before the throne of God, the Evil Angel will trample him down!"

Flint was as white as the marble mantel-piece on which he leaned. Edward Walters stood a short distance in front of him; his eyes were fixed, and he spoke like one who sees what he is describing.

"Then the man—the merchant—wrapped the child in the sailor's cloak. In a few minutes the sailor stood in the stormy street, with a frightened little heart throbbing against his own. The cutting sleet and snow beat in his face, and the wine made a veil before his eyes. It was a fearful night. Not a human form was to be seen; the street lamps were blown out, and the poor mariner drifted to and fro like a deserted ship. He had become mad; the strange events had eaten into his brain. He wrapped the babe closer in his cloak, and placed her in a doorway, out of the cold. He wandered from street to street, then he sank down in the snow. When his senses came to him he had been in a madhouse—God, how many years! Was it ten? The June wind broke through the barred window; it touched his forehead, and it was like a human hand rousing one from a dreamless sleep. One evening soon after, he stood before the merchant, who was sipping his choice cordials, as you were to-night, Flint, and the sailor asked for the child. The man replied: 'The child is dead; you left it in the cold, and it died, or you threw it into the river. I saw a body at the deadhouse, weeks afterward, which looked like the child. You committed murder; it was your own act. Suppose you were to be hung for it!' Have I a good memory, John Flint?"

And the man turned his wild eyes on Mr. Flint, who gave no other evidence of not being a statue than a slight tremor of his upper lip.

"What did the madman say to the merchant? He took the cool, calculating villain by the throat, and cried, 'Write me out, in your round, clerkly hand, a full avowal of your guilt in this matter, or I'll strangle you!' The merchant knew he would, so he wrote this document with trembling fingers, and he signed it JOHN FLINT!"

Then the sailor drew from his pocket an old stained letter, and held it up to the light. He looked at it sadly, and then his mind seemed to wander off through a gloomy mist of memories, for his eyes grew gentle and dreamy.

He spoke softly, almost tenderly:

"John Flint, you never saw me weep. Look at me, then. I am thinking of an old country-house which stood in a cluster of trees near a sea-shore. It once held everything that was dear to me—my children. Three years ago I stood with my hand on the gate, and looked into the little garden. It had gone to waste; the wind had beaten down the flower frames; the honeysuckle vines were running wild, and there was the moss of ten years' growth on the broken chimney-pots. The rain had washed the paint off the house, and the windows were

rded up. There was something in the ruin and

stillness of the place which spoke to me. Twilight added a gloomy background to the picture. I broke the rusty fastenings of a side door, and entered the deserted building. It may have been fancy, but I saw two forms wandering from room to room, and through the darkened entries; now they would pause, as if listening for footsteps, then they would move on again, sorrowfully, sorrowfully. In the bedroom over the front door, I saw the shadow of a little coffin! *She* used to sleep there. Where were my children? Where was trustful old Nanny, that she did not come to me? The house was full of strange shadows, and I fled from it. I did not dare go to the village hard by. There were too many who might have known me. I sat down in the quiet churchyard where my wife had slept many a long year. I sat by a little mound on which a wreath of flowers had been laid—nothing remained of them but stems and the rotting string that had bound them. It had a peaceful look, the grave, and I wished that I had died when my mound would not have been made longer than the one at my side. What did the simple headstone say? It said: 'LITTLE BELL!'—that was all!"

The sailor grasped Flint's arm.

"Only little Bell!—that was all. But it was all the world to me! What a tale it told! What a

tale of weary waiting, and despair, and death! Did her little heart wait for me! Did she sicken and die when I did not come to her? Aye, it said all this and more. And my boy—was he living? was he searching for me? No, not searching, for close by my child's grave, a white stone had these words carved on it:" and the man repeated them slowly,

SACRED

TO THE MEMORY

OF

OUR FATHER,

LOST AT SEA.

"Not lost at sea," he said, almost inaudibly, "but lost! Ah, I could have died in that quiet place, with the moonlight on me! But I was startled from my grief by the shouts of some men on the roadside, and I turned and fled. Have you looked at the picture, John Flint?"

He spoke so mournfully, that Flint raised his little, sharp eyes, which all this time had been fixed on the carpet; but he made no reply.

"I'll have none of your gold, man. I was weak to want it. Give it to the poor. The shining round pieces may fall like sunlight into some wretched home. To me they are like drops of blood!"

And he pushed the gold from him, and went to

the window. He saw the dim eyes of Heaven looking down through the mist—heard the murmurs of the city dying away, and the calm of night entered his soul.

"May you be a better man when we meet again," he said, turning to Flint.

"But the letter," cried Flint, fearfully, "you won't——"

The sailor's lips curled, and something of his former severity returned.

"Take off your sanctimonious cravat," he answered, "wrap charity around you like a robe, that you may be pleasing in God's sight. You sent some gold to convert the Hindoos—the papers said so. Why, man! there is a Heathen Land at your door-step! John Flint, good night!"

The merchant stood alone.

The night wind swayed the heavy curtains to and fro, and half extinguished the brilliant jets of gas. He threw himself into a chair, and a vision of the Past rose up before him—the terrible Past. The ghosts of dead years haunted his brain, and remorse sat on his heart, boding and mysterious, like the Raven of the sweet poet—

"That unhappy master, whom unmerciful disaster
Followed fast, and followed faster, till his songs one burden bore!"

That night, as we have said, he dreamt of two blue, innocent eyes, which once looked confidingly in his—of two infant arms which encircled his neck. Those eyes haunted him into the realm of sleep, where myriads of little arms were stretched out to him, and he turned restlessly on his pillow!

VIII.

He trudged along, unknowing what he sought,
And whistled as he went, for want of thought.

DRYDEN.

VIII.

MR. FLINT IS PERFECTLY ASTONISHED, AND MORTIMER HAS A VISION.

The Light Heart—A Scene—The Sunny Heart—A Dream of Little Bell—A Hint.

Now that Mortimer Walters had destroyed the record of poor Snarle's guilt, he determined to be no longer a subject of Flint's authority. He had watched for months for an opportunity to become possessed of the forged cheque; and it was with a heart as light as a singing bird's that he tripped up the office stairs an hour before his time the next morning.

Tim was sweeping out.

Sleep had left no cobwebs in his young eyes; but when he saw Mortimer throw open the office door, humming a light-hearted air, he rubbed his eyelids with the sleeve of his dusty coat, as if it were a question in his mind whether or not he was dreaming.

"My last day here!" said Mortimer gaily to himself. "Weary, tiresome old books! my soul has grown sick over you for the last time."

He brushed the dust from off the dull-looking ledger, and went to work. "Won't I astonish him?" he thought, looking up; and he laughed so pleasantly that Tim, who was sweeping the rubbish into a dust-pan, suspended operations, and expressed his surprise in a somewhat dubious ejaculation:

"I vum!"

When Mr. Flint came in, he saw the same tall form bending over the accustomed desk that had met his eyes every morning for the last ten years; but he did not see the heart that was leaping with new life. And when, in his usual snarly way, he gave Mortimer orders to make up certain invoices, which would have employed the clerk till midnight, he opened a brief conversation which ended in his utter amazement.

"You will render Bowen & Cleet their account current, and make up the pork sale; it has been standing open long enough. And," added Mr. Flint, "fill up bills of lading for the D. D. coffee."

"I don't think I will," was the quiet reply.

Mr. Flint did not believe his ears.

"Mr. Walters!"

"Mr. Flint."

"You will fill up those bills of lading immediately."

"I wont!" plumply.

This caused Mr. Flint to sink in a chair with astonishment; and Mortimer went on writing.

"Did you say that you wouldn't?" asked Mr. Flint, looking at him.

"Yes, sir."

"You did!"

"My year," said Mortimer, leisurely, "expires to-day, and with it, I am happy to state, my connection with Flint & Snarle."

Mr. Flint hunted twenty seconds for his lost voice.

"You insolent ——"

"Sir!" cried Mortimer, turning to him abruptly, "until now I have borne your tyranny with meekness. We are no longer employer and clerk. We are man and man, with the advantage on my side. If you apply an insulting epithet to me, I shall pull your ears!"

O Tim, how you rubbed your hands, you little villain! How your limbs seemed to be receiving a series of galvanic shocks from an invisible battery! How your eyes sparkled, and your proclivity for fight got uppermost, till you cried out, "Pitch into him, old boy!"

"Go!" hissed Flint, through his closed teeth; "go!" that was all the word he could master.

Mortimer passed out of the office.

The genial sunshine slid from the house-tops, and fell under his feet; a thousand airy forms walked with him, and he felt their presence, though he could not see them.

He wandered through the Park. April had breathed on the cold ground, and the green grass was springing up to welcome her. The leaves were unfolding themselves, and the air was full of spring. The fountain had thrown off its icy manacles, and leaped up with a sense of freedom.

His dreamy eyes saw it all. The black shadows had fallen from him; he had left them with Flint; and a bright day had dawned within him and without him. Everything was tinged with iridescent light, for he looked at the world, as it were, through dew-drops. Happy morning—happy life! when one can put aside the trailing vines of painful memory, and let the warm sunshine of Heaven find its way into the heart.

In this sunny mood he turned his way homeward. He passed Mrs. Snarle on the stairs with a smile; he heard Daisy singing in the sitting-room; and he sat himself down in the yellow light

which streamed through the window of his bed-room, making a hundred golden fancies on the worn carpet:

> "The shadows of the coming flowers!
> The phantoms of forget-me-nots,
> And roses red and sweet!"

His eyes made pictures; his fancy inverted the hour-glass of his life, and the old sands ran back! He floated down the stream of time, instead of onward.

The sunshine grew deeper and broader, and filled the little room. Then it became condensed and brighter. Gradually it moulded itself into form, and little Bell, in her golden ringlets, stood at the side of Mortimer. Her white hand touched his shoulder, and he looked up—not in surprise, but with tenderness—with the air of a man who can gaze with unclouded eyes into the spiritual world and lose himself.

"I knew you were near," he said, dreamily. "I thought you would come. You have something to tell me. What is it, my little Bell? Thus you stood at my side, thus you looked into my eyes, the day on which I told Daisy that I loved her. Thus you come to me whenever the current of my life changes, to love and advise me. What is it, Bell—dainty little Bell?"

A sunny lip rested on his for a moment.

"Be strong!" said little Bell.

A cloud of sun-light floated around Mortimer, slipped down at his feet, and lost itself in the orange stream which flooded the window.

"He is dreaming of Bell," said Daisy, as she bent over him—"dreaming of lost Bell!"

And she closed the door after her softly.

Then Mortimer's vision of sister Bell was a dream? Perhaps it was not. Perhaps this real world is linked more closely to the invisible sphere than in our guesses. It may be an angel's hand which touches our cheek, when we think that it is only the breeze. ¿ *Quien sabe?* Who can say that in sleep we do not touch hands with the spirits of another world—the angels of hereafter? And what may death be but an intellectual dream!—Who knows?

Nobody knows. "But," suggests the gentle reader, "suppose you dispense with your Hamlet-like philosophy, and go on with your story, like the pleasant author that you are, instead of putting us to sleep, as you have your hero."

Reader, the hint was merited.

IX.

"My eyes make pictures when they are shut."

COLERIDGE.

IX.

DAISY AND THE NECKLACE.

Our petite Heroine — How she talked to the Poets — The Morocco Case—Daisy's Eyes make Pictures — Tears, idle Tears!

Mortimer was still sleeping an "azure-lidded sleep," as Keats has it, when Daisy again came softly to the door.

A pretty little woman was Daisy Snarle.

She had one of those faces which you sometimes pass in the street and remember afterward, ever connecting it with some exquisite picture, or, if you happen to be in a poetical mood, a dainty bit of music. That face was very sweet in the coquettish red and white "kiss-me-quick" which used to shade it sunny mornings, when Daisy went to market—a very beautiful face when she looked

up earnestly—a very holy face when she sat thoughtfully in her room at twilight. Her hair was dark chestnut, and she wore it in one heavy braid over her forehead. Her eyes were so gentle and saucy by turns that I could never tell whether they were gray or hazel; but her smile was frank, her laugh musical, and her whole presence so purely womanly, that one could not but be better for knowing her. Yet Daisy was not faultless. She had a wild little will of her own—none the worse for that, however. She could put her foot down—and a sweet little foot it was!—a temptation of a foot, cased in a tight boot—high in the instep, and arched like the proud neck of an Arabian mare, or the eyebrows of a Georgian girl. And then the heel of said boot!—But I daren't trust myself further.

Daisy stood looking at Mortimer with her fond, thoughtful eyes. Soon she grew tired of this, and, placing a stool by his chair, sat down and commenced sewing. From time to time she looked up from her work and smiled quietly.

"How he sleeps!" said Daisy, with a low laugh. "Will he be cross if I disturb him?"—and she laughed again. "I wonder," she said, at length, "if a tiny song would awaken him?"

So she sang in a gentle voice those touching lines of Barry Cornwall, commencing with—

"Touch us gently, Father Time!
As we glide adown the stream."

She sang them bewitchingly. The music must have stolen into Mortimer's dream, for he slept a quieter sleep than before. Miss Daisy did not like that, and pouted quite prettily, and shook her finger at him.

"O, how tiresome you are!" she said. Then she sewed for ten minutes quite steadily.

"I guess I'll arrange your books, Rip Van Winkle! and when you wake up, a half century hence, you won't know them, they'll be in such good order!"

And facetious Miss Daisy broke out in such a wild, merry laugh, that an early robin, perched on a tree beside the window, ceased chirping, and listened to her.

Her fingers grew very busy with Mortimer's books. Having dusted them carefully, she commenced to place them in an old black-walnut book-case, which must have had an antique look fifty years ago. And Daisy went on laughing and talking to herself in a most comical manner.

"Here, Mr. Theocritus!" she cried, taking up that venerable poet, and placing him upside down, "I'll just set you on your head for absorbing all that stupid boy's attention one live-long evening, when I wanted to chat with him."

An author is supposed to know everything about his characters; but I cannot tell why Daisy placed Mortimer's poet in such an uncomfortable position, unless she thought that the blood might run into the head of Mr. Theocritus, and cause him to be taken off with a brain fever!

"And you, Mr. Byron," Daisy continued, "you're a very wicked young fellow! and I won't let you sit next to Mrs. Hemans!" so she placed Plutarch between them. "But you and Shelly," Daisy said, resting her hand on Keats, "you are different sort of persons; you are too earnest and beautiful to be impure; and you shall sit side by side between L. E. L. and our own Alice Cary. And Chatterton! poor boy Chatterton!" I'll place you in that shadowy corner of the book-case, where the sunshine never comes!"

So Daisy made merry or sad, as the case might be, over her lover's few volumes; and when she had arranged them to suit her capricious self, she kissed her hand to Tom Hood, and locked them all—poets, romancers, and historians—in the black, sombre old book-case.

Our friend Daisy was in one of those playful, half-childish moods, which came upon her not unfrequently.

Now she looked around the room for some other

piece of useful mischief to do. She would turn over Mortimer's papers. Ah, what made her blush and laugh so prettily then? It was only a sheet of note-paper, on which Mortimer, in a dreamy moment, had written her name innumerable times—for know, good world, that true love takes the silliest ways to express itself.

Now she was curious.

She stood thoughtfully, with a small morocco case in her hand. The reader has seen it once in Flint's office. An undefined feeling stole over her; and it was some time before she thought of opening the case. She did so, however, and took from it a pearl necklace of rare design and workmanship. The necklace was in three parts, linked together by exquisitely carved clasps, from the largest of which hung a

composed of smaller and more costly pearls.

"How beautiful!" and she grew more thoughtful. Something within her recognized the jewels. It was

not her sight, it was not her touch, but an intuitive something which is finer and subtler than either.

"I have seen this somewhere—somewhere," she said; "but where?"

And she closed her eyes, as if the sunlight blinded some timid memory that was stealing through her brain. Her fancy painted pictures of strange places and things. Now she saw a country-house, among cool, quiet trees; then a man dying—some one she loved—but who? Now she was in a large city, and heard the rumbling of wheels and confused voices. Now the snow was coming down, flake after flake, and everything was white; then it was night—dark, stormy, and dreadful—and she was cold, bitter cold! Some one had left her in the white, clinging snow, and she was freezing!

Daisy opened her eyes. The snow and wind were gone, and April's sunny breath blew shadows through the open window. The house, the death, the storm —how were they connected with the string of pearls? And Daisy held the necklace on her finger-tips and wondered.

"Somewhere, somewhere—but where?"

Daisy could not tell where.

"I may have seen one like it," Daisy thought. "Perhaps this was Bell's, and these stones may

have rested many a time on her little neck. I wish I had known Bell!"

With this she placed the necklace in the case again, and tears gathered in her eyes, she knew not why.

"Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean."

She laid the box in the place where she had found it, and thought she would not speak to Mortimer of the necklace; he might be displeased to have her touch it.

Her gaiety had given place to sadness, and when she knelt by Mortimer's chair she could not help sobbing. Mortimer awoke and bent over her.

"What, weeping, Daisy?"

X.

Full knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily sighing :
Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.
Old year, you must not die :
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year you must not die.
He lieth still : he doth not move :
He will not see the dawn of day,
He hath no other life above.
He gave me a friend and a true love,
And the new year will take 'em away.
Old year, you must not go :
So long as you have been with us,
Such joy as you have seen with us,
Old year, you shall not go.
He frothed his bumpers to the brim :
A jollier year we shall not see ;
But though his eyes are waxing dim,
And though his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me.
Old year, you shall not die :
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

X.

ST. AGNES' EVE.

The Old Year—St. Agnes—Keats' Poem—The Circlet of Pearls—A Cloud—The Promise—Mrs. Snarle continues her Knitting.

THE Old Year had just gone by—the dear, sad Old Year! He died in the blustering wind, out in the cold! He lay down in the shadows, moaned, and died! Something has gone with thee, Old Year, which will never come again: kind words, sweet smiles, warm lips—ah, no, they will never come again! Hold them near your heart for love of us, Old Year! They came with you, they went with you! *Kyrie elyson!*

"I wish you could tarry with us," said Morti-

mer. "You were kind to us, merry and sad with us." And he repeated the lines,

"Old year, you shall not die:
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die."

"To-night, Daisy, will be St. Agnes' Eve, and if I sell my prose sketch to Filberty's Magazine, I'll be in a good humor to read you Keats' poem."

Since leaving Mr. Flint's employ, Mortimer had entirely supported himself with his pen. His piquant paragraphs and touching verses over the signature of "Il Penseroso," had attracted some attention; and he found but little difficulty in disposing of his articles, at starving prices, it is true; but he bore up, seeing a brighter time ahead. He had been so occupied in writing short stories and essays, that his romance, which lacked but one chapter of completion, was still unfinished.

Filberty's Magazine paid him so generously for the "prose article," that he could afford to devote himself to a task which did not promise immediate profit. He completed the novel at sundown that day; and after supper Daisy reminded him of his promise to read Keats' "Eve of St. Agnes."

"I sometimes think," said Mortimer, as good Mrs. Snarle seated herself in a low rocking-chair, pre-

paratory to a dose, while Daisy sat on a stool at his feet, "I sometimes think that this poem is the most exquisite definition of one phase of poetry in our language. Musical rythm, imperial words, gorgeous color and luxurious conceit, seem to have culminated in it. And the story itself is so touching that it would be poetical even if narrated in the plainest prose. How surpassingly beautiful is it, then, worked out with all the richness of that sweetest poet, who, in intricate verbal music and dreamy imagery, stands almost alone!"

Mrs. Snarle's head was inclined on one side, and the whole posé of her form was one of profound attention.

She was fast asleep.

The busy knitting-needles were placid in her motionless fingers; and Pinky, the kitten, was 'spinning a yarn' on her own account from the ball in Mrs. Snarle's lap.

"Who was St. Agnes?" asked Daisy.

"She was a saint who suffered martyrdom for her religious views during the persecution of the Christians in the reign of the Emperor Diocletian. But let us read the poem, which will make her more immortal than her heroism."

Mortimer opened the book, and his voice touched the verse with new music for Daisy's ears. Now

his tones would be low and sad, as he read of the old Beadsman, who told his beads in the cold night air,

> "While his frosted breath,
> Like pious incense from a censer old,
> Seemed taking flight for heaven."

Then his voice grew as tender as a lover's, when he came to the place where Porphyro, concealed, beholds Madeline as she disrobes:

> "Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
> Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
> Loosens her fragrant boddice; by degrees
> Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees."

"How few poets know how to handle color!" said Mortimer. "Azure, red, orange, and all poetic hues are mixed up in their pictures like a shattered rainbow! But how artist-like is Keats! His famous window scene has not been surpassed:

> "A casement high and triple-arched there was,
> All garlanded with carven imageries
> Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
> And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
> *Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,*
> *As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;*
> And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
> *And twilight saints and dim emblazonings,*
> *A shielded 'scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.*
>
> "Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
> And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,

As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon:
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together pressed,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seemed a splendid angel, newly dressed,
Save wings, for heaven!"

"Is it not exquisite?" asked Mortimer, looking in Daisy's face.

She nodded assent.

Mortimer fixed his eyes on a pearl necklace which gently clasped the girl's neck, and started. The cross undulated on her bosom, which rose and fell like two full white roses in the wind.

"Where did you get that?" and Mortimer laid his hand on her arm nervously.

"It was a freak," said Daisy, blushing. "Are you angry?"

"Not angry, Daisy."

"But you look so."

"Do I? I am not. I grow unhappy when I see that necklace."

"It was Bell's, then?"

"Yes—no—don't ask me, Daisy."

"Why?"

A shadow came over Mortimer's face.

That morning Daisy had been tempted to open the morocco case, and a desire to clasp the white necklace on her neck became irresistible. Something drew her to it, and the same feeling of mys-

tery and longing which stole on her when she first held the circlet in her hand while Mortimer was sleeping, overpowered her. Almost unconsciously she fastened the gold clasp, and when the little cross sunk down on her bosom, her heart grew lighter, and she went over the house singing like a canary. She wore it the whole day, pausing at times in her household duties to admire the pearls. After a while she forgot its existence, and her intention to replace it before Mortimer returned.

When Mortimer's eye caught sight of the necklace, Daisy was much embarrassed, for she could, in no intelligible way, account for having taken it. Mortimer was equally pained. He had unwillingly become possessed of the ornament, and saw no means by which he could return it to Mr. Flint without acknowledging that he had also taken the *check*. He dreaded to make so humiliating a confession, and, perhaps, he stood a little in fear of Mr. Flint's anger. The circumstance had caused him many moments of anxiety, and an unpleasant thought came to him, as he saw the purloined necklace on Daisy's innocent bosom.

"But you *a·e* angry?" said Daisy, looking up with dimmed eyes.

"No, pet."

"Then you will kiss me?" said Daisy, in a most winning way.

Mortimer did what most every one would have done "in the premises"—an act which was quite sufficient to make one break that part of the commandment which refers to envy. Surely a man would be inhuman not to, having once seen Daisy Snarle!

"I am not angry, but pained; I cannot tell you why. I wish you to promise me something."

"I will. What is it?"

"That you will not doubt me, whatever may occur in connection with this necklace—that you will love me, though I may be unable to explain condemning circumstances, or dispel the doubts of others."

"I promise that. But how strange," thought Daisy. "I am sorry that I was so childish as to take the necklace. Put it away, Mortimer, and forget that I did so."

Mortimer's cheerfulness returned, and he commenced reading the poem at the place where he had interrupted himself. Just as he finished the last verse, telling how, ages long ago,

"The lovers fled away into the storm,"

Mrs. Snarle awoke with a jerk, and went to knitting as though she had been doing nothing else the whole evening—a harmless subterfuge peculiar to old people.

XI.

Of making many books there is no end.

ECCLESIASTES XII., 12.

XI.

MORTIMER HAS AN INTERVIEW WITH THE GREAT PUBLISHER, AND MR. FLINT MAKES A DISCOVERY.

H. H. Hardwill, Publisher—Criminal Literature—Alliterative Titles — Goldwood — Poor Authors — A Heaven for them in the Perspective—Flint's Discovery, and the Horns of his Dilemma.

Mortimer looked up and read the sign—"H. H. Hardwill, Publisher." His heart half-failed him, and he stood looking in the large, book-filled window, with that romance which was to startle the literary world folded quietly under his arm, like any common paper. What kind of a man is Mr. Hardwill? he thought. Is he a large man, with a heavy watch-chain, or a thin, sky-rockety piece of humanity, dressed in black, and tipped off with red hair? Was he a cold, cast-iron man, like Flint? or a

simple, sorrowful one, like Snarle that was? But this last idea melted of itself. How could the famous publisher resemble the poor, unobtrusive Snarle? He, Mr. Hardwill, who received notes from the great Hiawatha, and hob-nobbed with Knickerbocker Irving; he, who owned a phial of yellow sand, which had been taken from a scorching desert with an unpronounceable name, and presented to him by the Oriental Bayard; he, who chatted with genial Mr. Sparrow-grass—God bless him!—(Sparrow-grass,) and joked with Orpheus Stoddard,—he like simple Snarle? Pooh!

"Is Mr. Hardwill in?" asked Mortimer. He came near adding, "the great publisher."

The clerk, to whom his eyes looked, said he believed he was, and went on calling off from a slip of paper:

"'Murdered Milkmaid,' two copies; 'Bloody Hatchet,' twelve copies; 'The Seducer's Victim,' thirty copies; 'The Young Mother,' five copies; 'The Deranged Daughter,' seven copies; 'Hifiluten and *other* poems,' one copy."

"Can I speak with him?" ventured Mortimer, as the clerk, who was calling off the *criminal literature,* paused for breath.

"'The Merry Maniacs,' ten copies—Yes, sir; but he's engaged. Wait awhile," continued the clerk, as Mortimer turned to go. "The Wizard of Wehaw-

kin,' six copies; 'The Phantom of Philadelphia,' twelve copies, etc., etc."

So our author seated himself on a case of books, and looked at the wall of volumes which encompassed him. Somehow or another, it suggested the Great Wall of China and the Cordilleras. He could give no reason why. No more can I. Perhaps he felt that light literature, paradoxical as it may seem, is always heavy, and so his mind ran on the prodigious freaks of man and nature.

After the clerk had finished calling off from the slip of paper, that promising young gentleman suddenly discovered that Mr. Hardwill was *not* engaged, and offered to conduct our friend into his august presence. Mortimer gathered up his heart, as it were, and his loosened manuscript at the same moment—"Her heart and morning broke together!"—and followed the clerk through an avenue of literature, to a snug inner office—that literary Sebastopol, which is forever being stormed by seedy poets and their allies, historians, romancers, and strong-minded Eves.

Could it be possible?

Was that middle-sized, dark-eyed, light-haired, pleasant-looking man the Napoleon of publishers? However, there was something shrewd in his dark eye, or rather eyes—for he had two of them—and a

certain expression of the mouth, which seemed full of dealings with the world.

"Is this Mr. Hardwill?" asked Mortimer.

"Yes, sir. Will you be seated?"

"I have a romance," commenced Mortimer, with hesitation, "which I would offer you for publication. I have written it carefully, and I think it possesses several new features ——"

Here his voice broke down, for he felt those dark, scrutinizing eyes in his face; besides, the intense attention with which he was listened to disconcerted him. Mr. Hardwill came to his relief.

"What is the title of your book?"

"It is called 'Goldwood.'"

"That is not happy."

"No?"

"No," said Mr. Hardwill, "it should be something striking—something to catch the eye in an advertisement. For instance, the—the ——"

"Frantic Father," suggested Mortimer, quietly; and he gazed at the carpet to keep from smiling.

Mr. Hardwill eyed him, and displayed his white teeth. There was a little satire in our author's remark which pleased Mr. H., who could not be hired to read the spasmodic books which he published. It was policy in him to cater for that largest class of readers whose tastes are morbid or inflamed, and he did so.

Mortimer had thrown aside his timidity. He gave a concise sketch of the plot, touching here and there on some supposed-to-be felicitous incident, and grew so autorially eloquent over his romance, that the careful Mr. Hardwill requested Mortimer to leave his manuscript with him, saying:

"I cannot give you much hope. I have more books ready for press than I can well attend to. If you will call on me the latter part of next week, you shall have my decision."

With these words, spoken in an off-hand, business-like way, Mr. Hardwill made a bow, which said, as kindly as such a thing *can* be said, "You needn't stay any longer."

Mortimer returned his bland smile frankly, and retired, though he would fain have called Mr. Hardwill's attention to that delightful and exciting scene in which Mr. Adine St. Clair meets Arabella Clementina after an estrangement of two weeks! but he didn't. He again threaded his way through the labyrinth of literature, and the last sound which fell on his ear, as he turned from the bookstore into the street, was,

"'The Ruined Cigar Girl,' twenty copies!"

"What on earth could anybody want of a 'Ruined Cigar Girl, or a 'Young Mother?'" and Mortimer laughed outright.

The wand of Prospero is neither more cunning nor more powerful than the pen of a well bred author. It creates something out of nothing, (more frequently nothing out of something), changes time, place, and human nature; it lifts up the blue roofing of ocean, and gives you a glimpse of fish-life; and deeper still, shows you the coral forests of the Naiads, and their aquatic palaces. It draws back the curtain of cloud-land, and feeds your fancy with forms that never have been, and never will be; summons spirits from the air, and gives melodious voices to all vernal things.

Pleasant magician that waves this wand! what curious people are walking in the chambers of your brain! What dreams are yours, and what cruel cuts this real world sometimes gives you! You have no right to be here, poor devil! You are somewhat misplanted; you belong to some sphere between earth and heaven, and not very near either. That such a place is provided for you I am certain. There it is that all your books will run through countless editions; there it is you can afford to hire some one to write your autograph for besieging admirers, and feed, as you should,

"On the roses, and lay in the lilies of life."

But I was speaking of pen-magic. It is not my present mood to do anything fantastical in that way. I only wish to give you a sight of Mr. Flint, as he appeared one afternoon some months after Mortimer had left his office. He was standing in that inner-room of his counting-house to which I have introduced the reader. I change my mind—he was not standing. He had just thrown himself into a chair, in which he did not seem at all easy.

I take peculiar delight in placing Mr. Flint in uncomfortable positions.

He was surprised, alarmed, and angry. He missed the forged check and the morocco case which he had watched so many years. That they had been purloined, he could not doubt, and his keen thought fell on Mortimer. The loss of the check troubled him; he liked to look at it occasionally, for Snarle's sake; but the necklace — that gave him strange alarm.

"Snake!" he hissed, "you have crawled into my affairs, and I'll tread on you—tread on you and kill you! You stole the check to save Snarle's name; and the necklace—why did you steal that? Was it valuable? Yes, that is it. I'll grind you in the dust. I'll put you in a prison, and let your brainless father look at you through the bars!"

This humane idea caused Mr. Flint to rub his dry hands, and chuckle violently.

"But"—here Mr. Flint's countenance fell. "If I do this, won't Walters ruin me with that unfortunate letter? O, I was a fool to write it; yet he would have murdered me if I had not.

And Mr. Flint thought and thought.

To obtain the letter was impossible. Walters might have left the city; even if he had not, there was a method in his madness which Flint knew he could not circumvent. He could not lose such a chance of crushing Mortimer as presented itself; and yet to attempt it while Walters had possession of the letter was unwise.

Mr. Flint was in a brown study.

He walked up and down his sanctum solemnly, neglecting to watch Tim and the book-keeper who had succeeded Mortimer. An half hour passed, and still he continued his walk and reverie, without any visible intention of stopping. His face lights up; he rubs his knuckles with ecstacy. He has got it! got it at last. He will have Mortimer arrested; he will have Mortimer's name suppressed, or give the newspapers a fictitious one. This will shield him from Walters, whose heart he will wring some of these days. Ah! that will be revenge.

It may strike the ingenious reader as strange that

Mortimer, having charge of Flint & Snarle's books, never came across his father's name. This would have been the case, and somewhat interfered with our novel, if Mortimer, when he applied for a clerkship with the firm, had not given Mr. Flint all the particulars of his life. For reasons best known to himself, Mr. Flint took every opportunity to strengthen Mortimer in the belief of his father's death, and every precaution to keep Walters from meeting him. Once, indeed, they stood face to face in the office; but, taking into consideration the number of years they had been separated, and the circumstances under which they met, it would have been most strange if a recognition had taken place. As to Mr. Snarle, being profoundly ignorant of Mortimer's early history, he could throw no light on Mortimer's mind; and everything worked to Flint's satisfaction. Every circumstance seemed to mould itself to his will.

There is an evil spirit, and a very powerful one, that holds the wires which move some of us puppets. The good are made to take the humblest seats in the world's Synagogue, and the wily and the evil-hearted are clothed in purple, fed on honey, and throned in the highest places. There will be a surprising revolution some of these times.

As Mr. Sparrowgrass would say, a revolution is "a good thing to have in the country."

XII.

Why, true, her heart was all humanity,
Her soul all God's ; in spirit and in form,
Like fair. Her cheek had the pale, pearly pink
Of sea-shells, the world's sweetest tint, as though
She lived, one-half might deem, on roses sopped
In silver dew ; she spoke as with the voice
Of spheral harmony which greets the soul,
When, at the hour of death, the saved one knows
His sister angel's near : her eye was as
The golden pane the setting sun doth just
Imblaze, which shows, till heaven comes down again,
All other lights but grades of gloom ; her dark,
Long rolling locks were as a stream the slave
Might search for gold, and searching find.

FESTUS.

XII.

WHAT DAISY DID.

The Arrest—Doubt and Love—Daisy and the Necklace—The Search—The heart of Daisy Snarle.

In an upper room of a miserable, dingy house which faced the spot where the old Brewery used to stand, Edward Walters sat one January evening reading the *Express*. There was one paragraph among the city items which he had read several times, and each reading seemed to strengthen a determination which had, at the first perusal, grown up with him.

"Right or wrong, I'll do it!"

With which words he folded the paper, and placed it in his pocket.

Daisy, too, read the paragraph that night, and the blood rushed into her cheeks, then left them very pale.

It was simply a police report—such as you read over your morning coffee, without thinking how many hearts may be broken by the sight of that little cluster of worn-out type. A young man, no name given, recently a clerk in the house of Messrs. Flint & Snarle, had been arrested on the charge of stealing a case of jewels from his employers.

Daisy, with dry eyes, read it again and again. Dark doubt and trusting love were at conflict for a moment; for doubt had pride for its ally, and love was only love. But the woman conquered. Mortimer, who had been arrested early in the forenoon, found means to send Daisy a note, in which he simply said—"I am charged with stealing the necklace, but I am as guiltless of the crime as you, Daisy."

Mrs. Snarle came in the room while our little heroine held the note in her hand.

"Mother," said Daisy, averting her head, "Mortimer will not come home to-night."

With this she threw the note into the fire, and left Mrs. Snarle alone, before the good lady asked any questions.

"That's very odd!" soliloquized Mrs. Snarle, briefly.

"You tell me that you are innocent," said Daisy, looking at a small portrait of Mortimer which hung over the fire-place—"I do not question, I only believe you!"

And then Daisy did a very strange thing, and yet it was very like Daisy. She untied the brown ribbon which bound her dark lengths of hair, allowing them to fall over her shoulders; then she braided the string of pearls with her tresses, and brought the whole in a beautiful band over her forehead. And she looked like a little queen with this coronal of jet and pearl shading her brows.

Daisy next picked the jewel-case to pieces, and threw the minute shreds into the street. This was scarcely done, when the door-bell rang impatiently.

The girl peeped from the window.

The two men at the door-step were not to be mistaken. Daisy's fingers trembled as she undid the fastenings of the door.

"We have orders to search this house, miss," said one of the officers, touching the vizor of his cap respectfully.

Daisy choked down a sob, and led them with an unnatural calmness from room to room.

Every place in the little house was investigated, but in vain; no necklace was to be found. Yet twice the breath of one of the searchers fell on the pearls in Daisy's hair. The two officers left the house in evident chagrin.

When they had gone, the girl sat on the stairs and sobbed.

Happily for her wishes, Mrs. Snarle had been absent during the search; and thus far had been kept in ignorance of Mortimer's disgrace. But Daisy could not hope to keep it a secret from her long, for they both would probably be summoned as witnesses in open court. The thought of giving evidence against Mortimer went through Daisy's heart like an intense pain. It terrified her, and her warm little heart was floating on tears all day.

The cloud which had fallen on her seemed to have no silver lining; all was cold, black and sunless. But there is no mortal wound to which some unseen angel does not bring a balm—

"There are gains for all our losses!"

Daisy remembered Mortimer's words: "*Promise that you will not doubt me, whatever may occur in connection with this necklace—that you will love me,*

though I may be unable to explain condemning circumstances, or dispel the doubts of others"—and the words came to her freighted with such hope and tenderness, that her sleep that night was deep and refreshing. Doubt had folded its wings in the heart of Daisy Snarle.

XIII.

LUDWICK.—*Now here's a man half ruined by ill luck,*
As true a man as breathes the summer air.

LAUNCELOT.—*Ill luck, erratic jade! but yesterday*
She might have made him king!

OLD PLAY.

XIII.

IN THE TOMBS.

The Author's Summer Residence—The Egyptian Prison—Without and Within—A Picture—Sunshine in Shadow—Joe Wilkes and his unique Proposal—Gloomy Prospects—The face at the cell-window.

THERE is not a pleasanter place in the world for a summer residence than Blackwell's Island! The chief edifices are substantial, and the grounds are laid out with exceeding care. The water-scape is delightfully invigorating, and the sojourners at this watering-place are not of that transient class which one finds at Nahant, Newport, and other pet resorts. Indeed, it is usual to spend from six to eight months on the "Island," and one has the advantage of contracting friendships which are not severed at the first approach of the "cold term"—for the

particulars of which "cold term," see that funny old *savant* of Brooklyn Heights, who has a facetious way of telling us that it has been raining, after the shower is over.—Bless him!

Such institutions as "Blackwell's Island" are god-sends to the *literati*. A poor devil of an author, who has a refined taste for suburban air, but whose finances preclude his dreaming of Nahant, has only to mix himself up in a street fight, or some other interesting city episode, to be entitled to a country-seat at the expense of his grateful admirers! Owing to a little oversight on his part, the author of this veracious history took a passage for "Blackwell's Island" a trifle earlier in the season than he had anticipated; and it is at that delightful region these pages are indited.

But the Tombs—heaven save us from that!

There are many pleasanter places in New-York than the Tombs; for that clumsy piece of Egyptian architecture—its dingy marble walls, its nail-studded doors and sickening atmosphere—is uncommonly disagreeable as a dwelling. Many startling tragedies have been enacted there—scenes of eternal farewells and lawful murders. I could not count on my fingers the number of men who have entered its iron gates full of life, and come out cold, still and dreadful!

It was here that Mortimer was brought.

Within, all was sombre and repulsive. Without, there was hum of voices, and the frosty rails which ran in front of the prison creaked dismally as the heavy freight cars passed over them; but these sounds of life were not heard inside.

The cell of Mortimer and its occupants, the morning after his arrest, presented a scene of gloomy picturesqueness.

Through a grated window, some six feet from the stone floor, a strip of sunshine came and went, falling on Mortimer, who leaned thoughtfully against the damp wall. The room, if we may call it one, was devoid of furniture, with the exception of a low iron bedstead, whose straw-stuffed mattress and ragged coverlid suggested anything but sleep. Daisy Snarle was standing with downcast eyes near the door which a few minutes before had closed on its creaking hinges, and outside of which the jailor stood listening.

The long, dark lashes were resting on her cheek; the pearls of the necklace, which gleamed here and there in the queenly braid, looked whiter by contrast with Daisy's chestnut hair. In one hand she had gathered the folds of her shawl, the other hung negligently at her side. From beneath the skirt of her simple dress, peeped one of the loveliest

feet ever seen, and her whole attitude was unconsciously exquisite. She had just ceased speaking, and the faintest possible tinge of crimson was on her cheeks.

"Daisy, you are one of God's good angels, or you would never have come to me in this repulsive place."

Daisy's eyes were still bent on the floor.

"Speak to me again, Daisy," said Mortimer, taking her hand. "Your voice gives me heart, and your words make me forget everything but you."

Daisy lifted her dreamy hands, and said, softly:—"They could not find it."

"Could not find what, Daisy?"

"The necklace," said Daisy, smiling.

"No," she continued, in a low, musical voice, "they searched in all the rooms, in all the trunks—turned over your papers and mother's work-basket—but they could not find it."

And Daisy smiled again.

"Where was it, Daisy?"

"Here!"

And Daisy, smiling all the while, lifted Mortimer's hand in hers, and placed it on the braid of hair.

Mortimer started.

"O, Daisy! Daisy! why did you do that?"

The little foot tapped gently on the stone floor.

"Because," said Daisy, dropping her eyes, "because, when I read your note yesterday, I doubted you for a moment: but when I looked at the portrait in your room, I believed you; and I hid the necklace in my hair, and came to ask your pardon."

"Let any misfortune come to me, darling!" said Mortimer, touched with this ingenious act, "let come what will, I am strong! As sure as little Bell looks down from Heaven, you do not wear a stolen necklace. How it came into my hands I cannot tell, without wronging the dead. But, Daisy, it was imprudent for you to run this risk."

"Oh, no; they hunted for something hidden, and could not see what was before their eyes," replied Daisy, giving a quick, low laugh, and then she grew thoughtful again.

"But if they *had* seen it, Daisy?"

"Well."

"You would have been implicated in this unhappy affair to your certain ruin, without benefiting me. You must leave the necklace here."

"But I wont!"

This time the pretty little foot was set firmly on the flagging.

The jailor, who had been an attentive listener to the foregoing conversation, thrust his hands into the capacious pockets of his overcoat with the bearing of a man who is completely satisfied.

"I knowed it," he said, emphatically; "the boy is misfortunate somehow, and the young girl's a trump—*she* is. Lord help 'em! But time's up, and I must stop their talk."

With this the man tapped on the door. Mortimer held Daisy in his arms for a moment, and then sat down on the bed.

Daisy was gone, and it seemed as if the sunlight had gone with her, the cell grew so gloomy to the prisoner.

"Young man," said the jailor, with a solemn look, "the young lady is very unprudent to go circumventing round with that necklace twisted up on the top ov her skull—*she* is."

Mortimer groaned.

"You heard all, then, and you will betray us!"

"Part ov what you say *is* true," returned the man, bluntly, "and part isn't. I heard yer talk, but my name *isn't* Joe Wilkes ef I blow on yer!"

Mortimer looked at the ruddy, honest face of Joe Wilkes, and gave him his hand.

"I believe you, my good man."

That individual appeared to be turning something over in his mind which refused to be turned over.

"Them keys, young man," he said at length, drawing forth from his pocket a bunch weighing some four pounds, "opens the door at the end ov the passage, and this one opens the street gate; now jist take that bit ov wood and bang me on one side ov my hed—not savagely, you know, but jist enough to flatten me, and make me look stunned-like——"

At this novel proposition Mortimer broke into a loud laugh, but Mr. Wilkes was in earnest, and insisted on being "flattened."

"I couldn't think of it, Mr. Wilkes!" cried Mortimer, weak with laughter; "I couldn't strike you systematically; I should be certain to demolish your head."

And Mr. Wilkes retired, perforce, with the air of an injured man.

Mortimer sat on the edge of the bed reflecting on the strange chain of circumstances which had placed him in his present position, and boldly facing the fact of how little chance he had of escaping Mr. Flint's malice. The excitement attending his arrest had passed away, and the reality of his utter helplessness came full upon him. For himself he dreaded

little, for no punishment for a supposed crime, however disgraceful, could make him guilty; but a prolonged imprisonment would leave Daisy and Mrs. Snarle without means of support. This caused him more anxiety than the thought of any suffering attendant on his conviction.

More than this troubled him. It was Daisy's devotion. He had, indeed, wished her to believe him innocent, but his generous mind revolted at holding her to promises made in happier moments. He could not make Daisy his wife while a blemish remained on his honor; and the circumstances relative to the forged check, with which the reader is conversant, he could not think of revealing, for Snarle's dying words haunted him strangely.

While Mortimer was thus meditating, two hands grasped the iron bars of the window, which was directly opposite the bed, and a moment afterwards a man's head threw a shadow into the cell.

Mortimer, absorbed in thought, had failed to notice it.

The first expression of the face was that of mere curiosity; this was followed by a startled look, and then an intense emotion distorted the features. The face grew deathly pale, and the eyeballs glowed

into the cell, more resembling those of a wild-cat than a human being's.

A deep groan came from the window, and the head disappeared instantaneously.

Mortimer looked up and glanced around the narrow room suspiciously, and then smiled to think how his fancy had cheated him.

The face was Edward Walters.

XIV.

Where more is meant than meets the ear.

IL PENSEROSO.

XIV.

A CLOUD WITH A SILVER LINING.

The Strange Visit—The Lawyer—Walter and Mr. Flint—The Clouds—A Strip of Sunshine—Mortimer.

About two hours after the incident related at the close of our last chapter, Edward Walters stepped from the door of Mrs. Snarle's house, waving his hand kindly to Daisy, who stood on the steps, and watched him till he turned out of Marion-street.

But we must turn back a little.

After leaving the Tombs, our friend went in search of Mortimer's residence, actuated by an impulse which he neither attempted to control nor understand — an impulse like that which had prompted him to visit the prison. He was led into the little parlor by Mrs. Snarle, to whom he represented

himself as one deeply interested in the misfortunes of Mortimer, and desirous of assisting him. His own astonishment surpassed that of Mrs. Snarle, when he found her entirely ignorant of the arrest. While he was speaking, and Mrs. Snarle — who stood with her hand on the back of a chair, from which she had just risen—was regarding him with a vacant stare, Daisy stepped into the room, without knowing that it was occupied.

Edward Walters ceased speaking, and fixed his eyes on what, to him, seemed an apparition. He had seen that pale, pensive face in his dreams for years. It had followed him out to sea, and in far lands where he sought to avoid it. He arose from the sofa, and approached Daisy with hesitating steps, as if he were afraid she would vanish into thin air before he reached her. Daisy shrunk from him, and looked inquiringly at her mother. Walters laid his hand on the girl's arm.

"Sometimes," he said, looking her full in the eyes—"sometimes the mind wanders back to childhood, and we have visions of pleasant fields and familiar places. Something we had forgotten comes back to us in shadow—voices, faces, incidents! Did you ever see a snow-storm in your thought?"

Daisy started as if in sudden pain.

Walters watched the effect of his question with unconcealed emotion.

"Yes," said Daisy, lifting up her eyes wonderingly.

"I knew it," said the man, abstractedly, taking Daisy's hand.

The girl drew back in fear, and Mrs. Snarle stepped between them.

"My words seem strange, lady; but I knew her when she was a babe."

And he turned his frank face to Daisy.

What do you know of me?" cried Daisy, grasping his arm eagerly.

"Everything."

"O, sir, do not deal in mystery! If you know aught of this child's life, in mercy speak!" and Mrs. Snarle caught his hand.

"I can tell nothing now."

And with this he abruptly put on his hat, strode into the hall and out of the front door, waving his hand to Daisy, who, as we have said, stood on the steps, and watched him till he was out of sight.

We will leave Mrs. Snarle and Daisy to their astonishment, and follow on the quick footsteps of our marine friend, to whom that day seemed crowded with wonderful events.

It did not take long for Walters to reach Wall-

street, where he disappeared in one of those many law offices which fringe that somewhat suspected and much-abused locality. On the door through which Mr. Walters passed was a tin sign, bearing, in gilt letters,

J. G. BURBANK, *Attorney at Law.*

What transpired between him and that gentleman we will leave to the surmises of the reader. After being closeted for an hour in a room whose only furniture consisted of one or two green baize-covered tables, piled with papers, and a book-case crowded with solid-looking volumes, our friend turned his thoughtful face toward the office of Messrs. Flint & Snarle.

Mr. Flint looked up from his writing, and found Edward Walters quietly seated beside him. They had not met since the interview we described at Mr. Flint's house; and the captain's presence at the present time was not a thing to be desired by Mr. Flint. The visit looked ominous. Whatever doubts he entertained respecting its object were immediately dispelled.

"I read the arrest in yesterday's paper," said Walters.

Flint, with an effort, went on writing.

"And this morning I visited the boy in his cell."

"Well!" cried Flint, nervously.

"And I found my son, John Flint!"

Mr. Flint found himself cornered, and, like a rat or any small animal, he grew cowardly desperate.

"You found a thief, sir—a miserable thief."

We will do Mr. Flint the justice to say that he considered Mortimer in that light.

"I am not sure of that," was the calm reply. "A man may be in prison, and yet be no felon; and I should doubt the guilt of any man whom *you* persecuted. But I did not come here to quarrel. The boy is my son, and he must be released."

"*Must* be, Mr. Walters!"

"I think I said so."

Flint regarded him with his cold, cynical smile.

"John Flint, there is nothing I would not do to serve the boy. There is nothing I will not do to crush you if you persist in convicting him. I do not know that he is innocent—I do not know that he is worthy of my love. I only know that he is my child."

There was an agony in the tone with which these words were spoken that was music to Mr. Flint. He smiled that undertaker's smile of his.

"The law must take its course," he said. "It is impossible to stop *that*."

"Not so. The examination takes place this afternoon. If you do not appear against him, Mortimer will be discharged. You have forgotten that I have *the letter*."

"Stop!" cried Flint, as Walters turned to the door, and he assumed his usual, fawning, hypocritical air.

"If I do as you wish, what then?"

"You shall have the letter."

"What assurance have I of that?"

"My word."

"Is that all?" said Flint. "Would you take mine, in such a case?"

"No," replied Walters, with delightful candor. "Your word is worthless. Mine was never broken. Do we understand each other?"

"Yes."

"There must be another stipulation."

"What is it?"

"You are not to mention my name to Mortimer. He does not know of my existence."

"I shall not be likely to meet him," returned Flint, a little surprised. "I thought you had seen him."

"I did—through the bars of his cell."

And Mr. Flint was left alone in no enviable state of mind. So absorbed was he in his disappointment, that Tim several times that afternoon whistled snatches from "Poor Dog Tray," with impunity.

The twilight came stealing into the room in which Mrs. Snarle and Daisy were sitting. The food on the supper table remained untouched. Neither of them had spoken for the last half hour; the twilight grew denser and denser, and the shadows on their faces deepened. Daisy had told her mother all—the search of the officers for the necklace, her visit to the Tombs, and Mortimer's protestation of innocence. Mrs. Snarle never doubted it for a moment; but she saw how strong their evidence might be against him.

"God only knows how it will end, Daisy."

"As God wills it, mother!"

As these words were said, a shadow fell across the entry, and a pair of arms was thrown tenderly around Daisy's neck.

"Mortimer!"

XV.

QUIN.—*Is all our company here?*

MID-SUMMER'S NIGHT DREAM.

XV.

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES.

A Picture—The Lawyer's Note—Mr. Hardwill once more—The Scene at the Law Office—Mr. Flint Hors du Combat—Face to Face.

"MORTIMER!"

That was all Daisy said.

The candles were lighted, the dim, sad twilight driven out of the room, and a happy trio sat around the supper table. Mrs. Snarle smoothed her silk apron complacently; Daisy's eyes and smiles were full of silent happiness; and Mortimer, in watching the variations of her face, all so charming, forgot the misfortunes which had so recently threatened him.

Daisy gave Mortimer an account of the unknown's strange visit; and, inexplicable to himself, Morti-

mer connected it in some way with his unexpected release.

Soon after Mrs. Snarle had retired, the lovers sat in the little room, which was only lighted by a pleasant fire in the grate. Wavering fingers of flame drew grotesque pictures on the papered walls; then a thin puff of smoke would break the enchantment, and the fire-light tracery fled into the shadows of the room.

It was a delicate picture.

Mortimer was sitting at Daisy's feet, playing with the fingers of a very diminutive and dainty hand; Daisy was bending over him; and as the glow from the fire came and went in their eyes, one could see that a long brown tress of Daisy's hair rested on Mortimer's.

What if their lips touched?

"O!" cried Daisy, drawing back, "a note was left here this afternoon, while you were in ——"

"The Tombs," finished Mortimer, smiling.

"Yes," replied Daisy. I was afraid to open it, though."

"Were you?"

"Yes," she said, laughing. "I thought it might be from that charming young lady whom you assisted to cross Broadway last month; and of whom you

speak so pleasantly when I am the least bit out of humor."

And the girl looked at him quizzically with her impudent eyes.

Mortimer, by kneeling close to the fire, was enabled to read the note.

"That is strange—read it, Daisy."

Daisy read:

"Sir, — By calling at my office, No. —— Wall-street, to-morrow, at 4 P. M., you will learn something of importance. It is necessary that Mrs. Snarle and her daughter should accompany you.

"Respectfully,

"J. C. Burbank,

"*Attorney at Law.*"

About the same hour that evening, Mr. Flint received a communication of similar import, after reading which, he said:

"Hum!" and thrust the note into his vest-pocket.

Hum, indeed, Mr. Flint. There was something in store for you.

The next morning Mortimer bethought himself of his "Romance," and directed his steps toward the sanctum of Mr. Hardwill.

He found that gentleman talking with three new

geniuses in pantelets, who were attempting to convince the great Pub of his mistake in refusing to "bring out" a pregnant-looking manuscript which the authoress was holding in her hand with a tenderness that was touching to behold.

When they had retired, Mr. Hardwill extended his hand to Mortimer.

"Sharp young man," he said, displaying his white teeth. "You didn't wish to appear anxious about your book; I was on the point of sending for you. You were to have called on me three days since. Well, sir, I like the story."

Mortimer bowed.

"Did you read it all, sir?"

"I? Not a line of it," returned Mr. Hardwill. "I never look at anything but the size of the manuscript."

"Then you buy by the *weight*," said Mortimer, smiling.

"Not precisely. I never publish anything of less than four hundred pages. As to weight, I sometimes find a MS. of the right size altogether too heavy; but yours is not, my reader says."

"Your reader, sir?"

"Yes, I am a mere business man," quoth Mr. Hardwill, explanatorily. "I seldom read my publications. I merely sell them—sometimes I don't do

that. I have a reader who looks over sizeable MSS., and I abide by his judgment."

"Ah!"

"He is a man of fine scholarship and literary attainments."

Mr. Hardwill might have added—"and has the sway of 'The Morning Rabid' and 'The Evening Twilight,'" but he did not.

Arrangements were made to publish "Goldwood," with the euphonious and "striking title" of "Picklebeet Papers." Now, whether "Picklebeet" was a vegetable in vinegar, or the name of some charming country-place, I cannot say; but "Picklebeet," whatever it was, had as much to do with the contents of the book as the biography of my reader's grandmother.

On what terms the "Picklebeet Papers" were published, concern neither the reader nor myself; but, while remarking, *en passant*, that the book, owing to some extraordinary freak on the part of the public, never went to a "second edition," we will fix the hands of the city clock to suit ourselves.

It is 4 P. M.

Without further preamble, we will lead the reader (mine, not Mr. Hardwill's) to Mr. Burbank's law office, at which place the threads of our story become somewhat disentangled. We are not sorry at

this, (we doubt if the reader is,) for there is a satisfaction in rounding off a plot—in coming to the last page, where the author can write "FINIS"—which no one but a scribbler may know. But this pleasure is not a little touched with regret, as he sweeps the carefully-moved images from the chess-board of his brain, and tells you in those five letters that the game is finished.

The personages in the law office are not strangers to us, if we except the lawyer.

Mrs. Snarle and Daisy, with their veils down, are sitting in the back part of the room, and Mortimer stands behind them, speaking in a low voice to Daisy.

Edward Walters is seated at a desk, the screen around which prevents him from being observed by the first-described group.

Mr. Burbank, a dark-eyed, large-mouthed man, occupies a table in the centre of the apartment, near which is a chair for Mr. Flint, who has not yet made his appearance.

This was the position of the parties on Mr. Flint's entrance.

The merchant gave the lawyer three bony fingers, bestowed a stiff, surprised bow on Mortimer, and glanced suspiciously around him, evidently not liking the company he was in.

Mr. Flint glanced inquiringly at the lawyer.

"As all the parties concerned in this meeting are present," commenced the devotee of Blackstone, "I will at once proceed to business. You are too much of a business man, Mr. Flint, to require a prelude to interrogations which will explain themselves."

Mr. Flint looked very doubtful.

The lawyer ran his fingers through a crop of shaggy hair with professional dignity.

"It is something over twenty years since your brother, Henry Flint, died, is it not?"

The merchant nodded.

"He left no heirs — I believe," continued the lawyer, with a delightful appearance of hesitation.

"He left one child," said Flint, nervously. Mr. Flint did not like the turn which the conversation was taking.

"Ah, yes! A daughter, if I remember correctly. Let me see, Maude Flint was the name."

(This slight dialogue caused Daisy's breath to come and go quickly.)

"Maude Flint!" she whispered hastily to Mortimer. "Listen! M. F.,—the initials in the necklace!"

"I drew up the will at the time," said Mr. Burbank, thoughtfully; "but my memory has been tasked with more important things."

He turned abruptly to Mr. Flint.

"What became of this child—Maude?"

"Died," returned Flint, briefly, with an uncomfortable air.

"And the property ——?"

"Came to me—the child having no other relative," said Flint, rallying.

The lawyer was silent for a moment.

"Now, Mr. Flint, suppose I should tell you that your brother's child is still living, what would you say?"

"I should say, sir," cried the startled merchant, springing to his feet, "I should say, sir, that it was a lie! I see through it all. This is a miserable conspiracy to force money from me. Your plot, sir, is transparent, and I see that snaky individual crawling at the bottom of it." He pointed at Mortimer. "But it won't do!" he thundered, "it *won't* do!"

"Of course it won't for you to get in a passion. The man who gets into a passion," continued Mr. Burbank, philosophically, "never acts with judgment. And what is the use, Mr. Flint? I am acquainted with all the circumstances of the child's disappearance; indeed, I have a full account of them in your own handwriting."

Mr. Flint turned white.

"This letter, which I shall give you by and by,"

said the man of law, "divulges a plot of villainy which heaven happily thought fit to prostrate; and I'll prove the truth of what I say."

And the lawyer motioned for Daisy to approach him.

She did so, mechanically.

"This lady," said Mr. Burbank, smiling blandly, "is my first witness. Will you raise your veil?"

Daisy complied with the request, and looked Mr. Flint in the face. Flint turned his eyes on her with such earnestness that she shrunk back. Then he staggered to a chair, and exclaimed involuntarily:

"So help me God, it is Henry's child!"

Edward Walters rested his hands on the desk, and looked over the baize screen.

Mortimer stepped to Daisy's side.

"This necklace," he said, in a trembling voice, "I return to the owner. It was my misfortune to take it by mistake, and it is happiness to return it to one who does not require any proof of my innocence."

Daisy pressed his hand.

"Let me go!" exclaimed Mr. Flint.

"Presently, Mr. Flint. You must first witness the *denouement* of our little drama."

With this the lawyer turned to Mortimer, and handed him a paper.

"What this fails to explain relative to your father, you must seek from his own lips."

"My father!—his lips!"—repeated Mortimer, bewildered.

He opened the paper.

"My father! where is he?"

"Mortimer!" cried Walters, pushing aside the screen.

And they stood face to face.

XVI.

Our revels now are ended: these our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind!

SHAKESPEARE.

XVI.

THE OLD HOUSE BY THE SEA.

Clap-Trap—John Flint—The Old House by the Sea—Joe Wilkes—Strephon and Chloe—Tim Enjoying Himself—Edward Walters and Little Bell—A Last Word.

It is an artistic little weakness we scribblers have of seducing our dramatis personæ into *tableaux vivants*, and deserting them abruptly. In a story of this kind, which depends rather on action than fine writing for interest, this species of autorial claptrap is very effective, if cleverly done. So we will make no excuse for leaving *nuestros amigos* at the lawyer's office, and drawing a green curtain, as it were, on the actors of this humble comedy.

Some six years are supposed to have elapsed since the drop-scene fell on our last act.

From this out our story is rather a pantomime than a play. We give pictures and figures, instead of dialogues and soliloquies. Will the reader follow us?

I.

Time has not touched Mr. Flint gently. His hair is grayer, his step more feeble, and his eyes have a lack-lustre look. His cravat is whiter and stiffer, if possible, than ever; and he looks more religious. God grant that he is so. But we doubt it. For to such as he, nor April, with its purple-mouthed violets, nor red ripe summer, with its wealth of roses, nor the rich fruit-harvest of autumnal suns, bring wisdom's goodness. The various months teach him no lesson. Let him go. He came like a shadow into our plot, so let him depart. He is not a myth, however, but flesh and blood mortality; and though we have only outlined his weakness—his love of gold, his cold, intriguing spirit—yet the sketch is such that, if he looks at it, he will have the felicity of seeing himself as others see him!

II.

It is a day in June, an hour before sunset. The lanes leading to an old house situated between Ivyton and the sea, are fringed with pink peach blossoms,

and the air is freighted with their odors. The violets, with dew in their azure eyes, peep from every possible nook; and those sweet peris of the summer wood, wild roses, are grouping everywhere. Surely Titania has been in this spot, breathing exquisite beauty upon the flowers, or, perhaps, Flora's dainty self. The blue-bells, these yellow-chaliced butter-cups, are fit haunts for fairies, and, perchance, wild Puck, or Prospero's good Ariel has been slumbering in them. But let us draw near to the fine old house which stands in this new Eden. It was here that we first met the little castle-builders—the child Bell and Mortimer. The place is not changed much. The same emerald waves break on the white beach; the same cherry-trees are spreading their green tresses, and the simple churchyard sleeps, as it used, in sunshine and shadow.

The house has been newly painted, and the fresh green blinds make one feel a sense of shade and coolness. The garden in front has been re-made with a careful eye to its old beauties. The white pebbled walks, the strawberry and clover beds, the globes of pansies, and the clambering honey-suckle vines, are all as they were years ago. Even the groups of wild roses, by the door, bud and bloom as if the autumn winds had never beaten them down.

We shall accuse the reader with having a bad

memory, if he does not recognise Joe Wilkes in the stalwart form and honest face of the gardener, who occupies himself with tying up a refractory vine, which persists in running wild over the new summer-house. It is he, indeed—the whilome jailor of the Tombs, who has laid aside his ponderous prison-keys, and taken up the shovel and the hoe.

III.

Two persons are standing at the "round window," where Bell and her brother used to linger, dreamily, in the twilights of long ago. The rays of the setting sun glance over the waves, and fall on the faces of Mortimer and Daisy—Daisy Snarle no more, but little Maude Walters. Their honey-moon has been of six years' duration, and to such as they, that sweet moon of tenderness never wanes, but runs from full to full—never new and never old! Strephon woes Chloe as of yore. The lover, as in some antique picture, is ever kneeling at the feet of his mistress, and she, through the gathering of years, looks down on him with the olden tenderness and the April blushes of womanhood! To such as they, life plays on a dulcimer. The golden age is not dead to them. They see the shepherd Daphnis seated on the slopes of Ætna, and hear him pipe to the nymph Eschenais. This "bank-note world," to them, is

Arcady, and their lives are sweet and simple as pastoral hymns!

But we, the author of this MS., are growing pastoral ourselves, and Heaven forbid that we should venture into a field which one of our poets has recently brought into disrepute by his indifferent blank verse.

Mortimer, leaning on the sill of the window, is looking at Daisy, who stands a little in the background, with that kissable white hand of hers shading the sun from as dangerous a pair of black eyes as ever looked "no" when they meant "yes." She is watching a speck of a boat, which is dancing up and down on the waves like a cork. Mortimer has just brought a telescope to bear on the distant object, and we, with that lack of good-breeding which has characterized all romancers from time immemorial, will look over his shoulder. The delighted occupant of the boat is that audacious fellow, Tim, who has taken a trip up to Ivyton from the great city, to spend a week with "Mr. Mortimer." It may be well to say that Tim—Timothy Jones, Esq., Mr. Reader—has ceased to have a proclivity for the "machine;" and now-a-days, the City Hall alarm bell never disturbs his equanimity. Indeed, he is so metamorphosed by time and a respectable tailor, that the gentle reader stands in some danger of not

recognizing him at all. Hence the above formal introduction. Just notice the set of those cream-colored pants, falling without a wrinkle over those mirror-like patent leathers, and the graceful curve of that Shanghai over the hips! Just notice! And more than all, that incipient *moustaché*, which only the utmost perseverance on the part of Tim and *Mr. Phalon* has coaxed out into mundane existence!

The writer of this veritable history has a great mind to drown Tim for his impudence; but as that young gentleman has a good situation in a Front-street commission-house, he refrains, for a capsize a mile from land would considerably interfere with Young America's prospects.

IV.

Captain Edward Walters sits on the door-step of the old house; and through a curtain of honey-suckle vines, which he draws aside, is watching the fawn-like motions of

"A six years loss to Paradise!"

Is it little Bell come back again? It is very like her. Walters thinks so, as the child runs from flower to flower like a golden-belted bee, and a mist comes over his fine eyes, and he can scarcely see his grandchild for tears.

His lips move, and perhaps he is saying: "Little Bell! Little Bell!"

And he thinks of the angel whom he left years ago, playing on the *partarré*, in front of the gate. He hears her clear, crystal laugh, and sees her golden ringlets floating among the flowers, and cannot tell if they be curls or sunshine!

The child in the garden resembles the dead Bell as one white lily does another. She has the same wavy tresses, shading the same dreamy eyes, with their longing, languid expression. Her form has the *abandon* of childhood, with a certain shadow of dignity that is charming. She is very fragile and spiritual; and it seems to us as if Heaven, in moulding the child, had hesitated whether to make her an Angel or a Flower, and so gave her the better parts of each!

Let us take one more look at her sweet young face—

> "A thing of beauty is a joy forever!
> Its loveliness increases; it will never
> Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
> A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
> Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing."

Little Bell holds an armful of lilacs against her bosom; and, with her eyes running over with childish merriment, trips toward the house; but two arms

stretching out from the vines catch her. She utters a pretty scream, and then sits quietly on Walters' knee. He kisses her laughingly; but his face grows serious as his eyes fall on a string of almond-shaped pearls which encircle the child's delicate neck; on the innocent white bosom lies a

It is Daisy's Necklace; that is What Came of it; and here, gentle reader, is

The End of the Chain.

EPILOGUE.

DON SEBASTIAN.—*You have no plot.*

FABRICIO.—*But such characters! and every one is as true as truth: copied right off from nature.*

DON SEBASTIAN.—*Badly done, sir Poet.*

LOPE DE VEGA.

EPILOGUE.

"What a mournful glory falls upon the October woods! It seems as if a broken rain-bow were strained through a sieve of gray clouds, and sprinkled over the crisp leaves. Ochre, vermillion, dappled russet, and all rare tintings! And then the wind that rushes so gloriously through the woodlands, bearing with it a rich, earthy smell, and scattering the purple wealth, the hoarded gold of the autumnal days! Pleasant Forest, with your oaken harps! Pleasant little Town, lying quietly in sunshine and moonlight—how sad I was to leave ye! Pleasant River, that stealest up from the sea, past the fort

and into the old weather-beaten seaport town—crawling lazily among the rotting piers of deserted wharves, then gliding off through the shaky bridge, squirming and curveting into a world of greenery, like a great serpent with an emerald back! And the girls! Village belles, rustic flirts—eyes, lips, shady curls, white hands, little feet, enchanting pouts—ah, me!

> "Pleasant it was when woods were green,
> And winds were soft and low—"

This rhapsodical soliloquy was interrupted one fine October morning, two days after my return from the sea-side, by a voice there was no mistaking. It was Barescythe, who startled Mrs. Muggins with the following pertinent inquiry:

"Prolific producer of sea-prodigies, is Ralph at home?"

I could not see Mrs. Muggins' face, for that good soul was standing at the foot of the stairs; but I knew her feelings were injured, and I hastened out of my room to prevent any verbal combat that might ensue.

Mrs. Muggins, (*after a long silence, and with some asperity*)—"What, sir?"

Barescythe, (*petulantly*)—"Is Ralph in, Sycorax?"

What reply the "relick" of Joshua Muggins might

have made to this interrogation, is only to be imagined; for I immediately "discovered" myself, to use a theatrical phrase, and led my solemn friend from hostile ground.

"My dear Barry," said I, after greeting him cordially, "you shouldn't—"

"Shouldn't what?"

"Call Mrs. Muggins names."

"Sycorax? She deserved it. Women are Cleopatras until they are thirty, then they are old witches with broomstick propensities! Don't interrupt me. Don't speak to me."

I choked down a panegyric on Woman, for I knew that Barry was thinking of a cold, heartless piece of femininity that, years and years ago, forgot her troth to an honest man, and ran away with a moustache and twenty-four gilt buttons. I could never see why he regretted it, for Mrs. Captain Mary O'Donehugh never stopped growing till she could turn down a two hundred weight; and she looks anything but interesting, with her long file of little O'Donehughs—nascent captains and middies in the bud!

I knew that Barescythe was not in a mood to be critically just, yet, for the sake of turning his thoughts into different channels, I glanced significantly at the MS. under his arm.

"My Novel," I ventured.

"Like the man in the play," said Barescythe, "the world should ask somebody to write it down an ass!"

With which, he threw the manuscript on the table before me.

His remark was uttered with such an air of logic, that I nodded assent, for I never disagree with logicians.

"The world is wide-mouthed, long-eared, and stupid—it will probably like that affair of yours, though I doubt if the book sells."

And Barry pointed to the curled up novel on the table.

I bowed with, "I hope it will."

"The world," he continued, "that gave Milton £10 for *Paradise Lost*, ought surely to be in ecstacies over DAISY'S NECKLACE."

"Barry," said I, somewhat nettled, "is it my good nature, or your lack of it, that seduces you into saying such disagreeable things?"

"Neither, Ralph, for I no more lack good nature than you possess it. But we wont quarrel. I am sore because the day of great books has gone by! Once we could boast of giant minds: we have only pigmies now."

"But let them speak, Barry. There may be some

among us that are not for a day. Who foresaw in the strolling player, in the wild, thoughtless Will Shakspeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, the Dramatist of all time? Your pet Homer was a mendicant. Legions of our best poets were not acknowledged, until the brain that thought, was worn out, the hand that toiled, cold, and the lips that murmured, patient forever!

> 'So angels walked unknown on earth,
> But when they flew were recognized!'

What if my poor story is stale and flat beside the *chef-d'œuvre* of Sir Walter Scott's genius? Barry, there is a little bird in our New-England woods known only by its pleasant chirp; yet who would break its amber bill because the nightingales in eastern lands warble so deliciously?"

Barry laughed.

"There you come, Ralph, with your bird-conceits! You flap the wings of some thread-bare metaphor in my face, and I cannot see for the feathers! You are not a man to argue with. Poetical men never are: they make up in sentiment what they lack in sense; and very often it happens that a bit of poetry is more than a match for a piece of logic. 'No more of that, Hal, an' thou lovest me.' Your book

is a miserable one. All your voluble ingenuity cannot controvert *that*."

Barry's better nature had slipped out of him for a moment into the sunshine, like a turtle's head; but it slipped back again, and the speech that commenced with a laugh ended with a snarl.

"It shows," he said, rumpling the manuscript with a careless hand, "a want of Art. The construction of the tale is crude: the characters are all old friends with new names—broken-down stage-horses with new harnesses—and the prose throughout is uneven. How can it be otherwise, since it is only an intolerable echo of Hood, Dickens, and Charles Reade? Your want of artistic genius is shown in taking three chapters to elaborate "little Bell," who has no kind of influence in working out the plot, and who dies conveniently at Chapter III. Your imitative proclivities are prominent in the chapter headed 'A Few Specimens of Humanity.' Was ever anything more like the author of 'The Old Curiosity Shop?' Your short, jerky sentences are modeled after Reade's 'Peg Woffington,' and 'Christie Johnstone,' or any of Dumas' thefts. As to the plot, *that* is altogether too improbable and silly for serious criticism. And then the title, 'Daisy's Necklace'—'Betsy's Garter!'"

"Ah, Barry, this is only Fadladeen and Feramorz

over again! Do you remember that after all the strictures of the eastern *savant*, Feramorz turned out to be not only a Poet but a Prince? I could take you to be 'Blackwood' slashing an American book, rather than a Yankee editor looking over a friend's virgin novel. You are like all critics, Barry. They ignore what might please them greatly if they had not their critical behavior on, and grow savage over that part of an author which they should speedily forget—like a dog on a country highway, that turns up his cold nose at the delicate hedge-blossoms, and growls over a decayed bone! So you find nothing to admire in my sixteen chapters?"

"Not much."

"Then say a good word for that little."

"There are some lines, Ralph, some whole paragraphs, may be, that would be very fine in a poem; but in an every-day novel they are strikingly out of place. Your jewels, (heart-jewels I suppose you call 'em,) seem to me like diamonds on the bosom of a calicoed and untidy chambermaid. That sentimental chapter with 'The Dead Hope' caption, is quite as good as your blank verse, and I would wager a copy of Griswold's 'Poets of America,' against a doubtful three-cent piece, that you wrote it in rhyme—it's not very difficult, you know, to turn your poetry into prose. You needn't stare.

In a word, your book is as tame as a sick kitten—I hate kittens: there's something diabolical in a yellow cat!"

I nipped a smile in the bud, and said, quietly:

"I intended to write a tame, simple domestic story. The facts are garnered from my own experience, and—"

"Garnered from your maternal grandparent, Ralph! Very much I believe it. Very much anybody will. It's a wonder to me that you didn't call the book 'Heart-life by an Anatomy'!"

"I will acknowledge, Barescythe, that I have not done my best in this affair. 'Yet consider,' as Fabricio says in the play, ''twas done at a sitting: a single sitting, by all the saints! I will do better when I have those pistoles, and may use time.' Local tales of this school have been popular. I wrote mine to sell."

"But it wont."

"Why?"

"Let's see. How many 'sunsets' have you in the book?"

"Not many, I think."

"That was an oversight. There should be one at the end of each chapter—twenty 'sunsets' at least. Then you have no seduction."

"A seduction?" horrified.

"Of course. What modern novel is complete without one? It gives a spicy flavor to the story. People of propriety like it. Prim ladies of an uncertain age always 'dote' on the gallant, gay Lothario, and wish that he wasn't so *very* wicked!"

And Barry raised his eye-brows, and broke out in such a clear, bell-like, canorous laugh—so contagious in its merriment, that I joined him; and I fancied I heard Mrs. Muggins beating a hasty retreat down the front stairs. It seems improbable to me that Mrs. Muggins had been listening at the key-hole of my door—respectable Mrs. Muggins.

"Then, sir," said Barry, re-assuming his mock-serious air, "there should be a dreadful duel, in which the hero is shot in his hyacinthine curls, falls mortally wounded, dripping all over with gory blood, and is borne to his ladye-love on a shutter! You have none of these fine points. Then the names of your characters are absurdly commonplace. Mortimer Walters should be Montaldo St. Clare: Daisy Snarle, (how plebeian!) should be Gertrude Flemming: John Flint, Clarence Lester, and so on to the end of the text. How Mrs. Mac Elegant will turn up her celestial nose at a book written all about common people!"

"Mrs. Mac Elegant be shot!" I exclaimed. I used to be sweet on Mrs. Mac Elegant, and Bare-

scythe has a disagreeable way of referring to that delicate fact. "It was not for such as she I wrote. I sought to touch that finer pulse of humanity which throbs the wide world over. The sequel will prove whether or not I have failed."

Barry laughed at my ill-concealed chagrin.

"Barry," said I, carelessly, meditating a bit of revenge, and unfolding at the same time a copy of the 'Morning Glory,' "did you write the book criticisms in to-day's paper?"

"Yes," returned Barry, coloring slightly.

"They are very fine."

Barry's blood went up to his forehead.

"So consistent," I continued, "with what you have been saying. I have neither read '*The Scavenger's Daughter*,' nor '*The Life of Obadiah Zecariah Jinkings*;' but, judging from the opinion here expressed, I take them to be immortal works. I could never be led to think so by reading the extracts you have made from the volumes, for the prose is badly constructed. Indeed, Barry, here's a sentence which lacks a personal pronoun and a verb."

"I see what you are aiming at," replied Barescythe, sharply. "You twit me with praising these books so extravagantly. I grant you that worse trash was never in type, (DAISY is not printed yet,

you know,) but will you allow me to ask you a question?"

"*Si usted gusta*, my dear fellow."

"Do you think that Gabriel Ravel, at Niblo's, turns spasmodic summersets on a chalked rope for the sake of any peculiar pleasure derived therefrom?"

"Why, Barry, I can scarcely imagine anything more unpleasant than to be turned upside down, fifteen feet from maternal earth, with an undeniable chance of breaking one's neck, on a four-inch rope. But why do you ask?"

"M. Ravel distorts himself for a salary, and no questions asked. I do the same. I throw literary summersets for a golden consideration. It is a very simple arrangement"—here Barescythe drew a diagram on the palm of his hand—"Messrs. Printem & Sellem (my thumb) give us, 'The Morning Glory,' (my forefinger) costly advertisements, and I, Barescythe, (the little finger) am expected to laud all the books they publish."

Out of respect to Barescythe, I restrained my laughter.

He went on, with a ruthful face:

"Here is '*The Life of Jinkings*'—the life of a puppy!—an individual of whom nobody ever heard till now, a very clever, harmless, good man *in his way*, no doubt,—the big gun of a little village, but

no more worthy of a biography than a printer's devil!"

With which words, Barescythe hit an imaginary Mr. Jinkings in the stomach with evident satisfaction.

"Yet I am called upon to tell the world that this individual, this what do you call him?—Jinkings—is one of the luminaries of the age, a mental Hercules, a new Prometheus—the clown! Why on earth did his friends want to resurrectionize the insipid incidents of this man's milk-and-water existence! If he made a speech on the introduction of a 'Town-pump,' or delivered an essay at the 'Bell Tavern'—it was very kind of him, to be sure: but why not bury his bad English with him in the country church-yard? I wish they had, for I am expected to say that ten thousand copies of the 'work' have been sold, when I know that only five hundred were printed; or else Messrs. Printem & Sellem withdraw their advertisements, in which case my occupation's gone! And this '*Scavenger's Daughter*'—a book written by a sentimental school-girl, and smelling of bread-and-butter—see how I have plastered it all over with panegyric!"

"And so, Barry," I said, with some malice, "you wantingly abuse *my* book, because I cannot injure *you* pecuniarily."

"Perhaps I do," growled Barescythe. "It is a relief to say an honest thing now and then; but wait, Ralph, till I start *The Weekly Critique*, then look out for honest, slashing criticism. No longer hedged in by the interests and timidity of 'the proprietors,' I shall handle books for themselves, and not their advertisements—

> 'Friendly to all, save caitiffs foul and wrong,
> But stern to guard the Holy Land of Song.'"

"What a comment is this on American criticism! O, Barry, it is such men as you, with fine taste and fine talent, who bring literature into disrepute. Your genius gives you responsible places in the world of letters, and how you wrong the trust!"

"Thank you," returned Barescythe, coldly, "you blend flattery and insult so ingeniously, that I hesitate whether to give you the assurance of my distinguished consideration, or knock you down."

"Either you please, Barry. I have spoken quite as honestly, if not so bluntly as you; and I regret that I have so little to say in favor of your inconsistent criticism. I am sorry you dislike my novel, but—"

I looked toward the chair in which Barescythe had been sitting.

He was gone.

I was not surprised, for Barry does few things

"after the manner of men," and a ceremonious departure is something he never dreams of. I sat and thought of what had been said. I wondered if we were the dregs of time, the worthless leaves of trees that had borne their fruit—if there were none among us,

> "Like some of the simple great ones gone
> Forever and ever by!"

And lastly, I wondered if any of our city papers had such a critical appendage as T. J. Barescythe.

?

It is pleasant to have your friend Mr. Smith pat you patronisingly on the back, and say, "My dear fellow, when is your book coming out?"

Of course, you send Mrs. Smith a copy after that—and all Mrs. Smith's relations.

"Daisy's Necklace" is nearly ready. The following advertisement, which I cut from "The Evening Looking Glass" of last Thursday, illustrates the manner in which "my publishers," Messrs. Printem & Sellem, make their literary announcements:

> "*We have in Press, and shall publish in the course of a few days, a New Work of rare merit, entitled—*
>
> DAISY'S NECKLACE,
>
> And what came of it.
>
> A THRILLING NOVEL, SURPASsing, in pathos and quiet satire, the most felicitous efforts of Dickens!!
>
> Printem & Sellem,
> *Publishers.*"

That was rather modest and pleasant ; but it is pleasanter than all to have an early copy of your book placed on the breakfast-table, unexpectedly, some sunshiny morning — to behold, for the first time, the darling of your meditation in a suit of embossed muslin. How your heart turns over—if you are not used to the thing. How you make pauses between your coffee and muffins, to admire the clear typography, the luxurious paper, the gold letters on the back!

Messrs. Printem & Sellem sent me two out-of-town papers, containing notices of "Daisy." These notices were solicited by advance copies of the work, for the purpose of being used in the publication advertisement. It is curious to remark how great minds will differ.

[*From the Blundertown Journal.*]

"NEW PUBLICATIONS.

"Daisy's Necklace, and what came of it. *New-York: Printem and Sellem.*

This production is an emanation from the culminating mind of glorious genius! Nothing like it has been produced in this century. It possesses all the fine elements of Dickens' novels, without any of their numerous defects.

Its scope, its pathos, and wit, *is** beyond all praise. Our Britannic brethren will no longer ask, 'Who reads an American book?' For we can reply, 'The World!'

"We learn, from good authority, that the publishers have received orders for twenty thousand copies of the work, in advance of its publication. We have no doubt of it; for 'Daisy's Necklace' will shed new lustre on the name of American Literature! Envious authors will abuse the work. As the immortal Goethe says, '*De gustibus non est disputandum!*' Our rush of advertisements prevents us from making voluminous extracts from the novel; this, however, would be useless, as *everybody* will read it for *themselves*.

"Orders addressed to HIGGINS & Co., of this town, will be promptly filled."

I should take the editor of the "Blundertown Journal" to be a man of cultured taste, appreciative and discriminating. The second review was not quite so "favorable," and can scarcely be called "a first-rate notice."

* Barescythe says, that the wrong verb used in this paragraph is what editors call "a typographical error."

[*From the Frogpond Gazette.*]

"DAISY'S NECKLACE" is the silly title of an absurd novel about to be issued by Printem & Sellem, of New-York. From the fact that the author's name is withheld from the title-page, we infer that he had *some* friends — some few who were not wholly willing that he should make a donkey of himself. We have read a great deal of trash in our day; but 'Daisy's Necklace' is the king of all vapid novels, — sentimental in sentiment, flaccid in fiction, and entirely intolerable from beginning to end. The first forty pages put us to sleep. We advise all druggists to keep the book for sale,—as an *anodyne*.

"The binding is good, and that is all the praise we can give so contemptible an abortion. A reading public that tolerates a novel like this, must be made up of very good-natured persons— assinine in temperament, and mentally obtuse.

"This 'work,' we presume, is written by that much-abused and prolific myth —'a young gentleman of this city,' distinguished, *of course*. We believe that he writes all of Printem & Sellem's books. At all events, those enterpris-

ing gentlemen always have 'a startling novel' in press, from his immortal pen. What a long string of sins these gentlemen have to answer for! What a commotion there would be among the shelves of their book-store, if dead authors could come back and reclaim stolen property! If the shade of *Lindley Murray* could stalk among them!

"For our part, we had rather see the Hudson River Railroad's list of 'dead and wounded,' than Printem & Sellem's list of 'Popular Publications!' But it is consoling to know that books like 'Daisy's Necklace,' in spite of 'purchased puffery,' find their level at last as linings for portmanteaus and third-rate trunks. We shall make cigar-lighters of our copy, and thank the stars that we were not born a book-making genius!"

Not a line quoted to prove the justice of the unstrained censure! I could not account for the malignant personality of this *critique*, until Barry informed me that my publishers never advertised their books in the columns of the "Frogpond Gazette." This, of course, explained it. I only wish I had the stubborn editor of the "Frogpond" at arm's length, I would try the consistency of his ears.

I was somewhat astonished, the next day, to find how ingeniously Messrs. Printem & Sellem made the adverse criticism subservient to their interests.

My lucubration was out.

The "Post" said so; the "Morning Rabid" said it; the "Evening Looking-Glass" said it; and a host of small fry echoed the important fact. I unfolded "The Rabid," and beheld the following advertisement:

"PUBLISHED THIS DAY,

A Novel of Unprecedented Power, entitled,

DAISY'S NECKLACE,

AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

THE 'FROGPOND GAZETTE,' (high authority), in a long review of this work, says: '*Daisy's Necklace is the King of all Novels.*'

'The Blundertown Journal' (also high authority) remarks:

'*This Book is an emanation from the culminating mind of glorious genius!*'

'*Nothing like it has been produced in this century!*'

'*It has all the fine elements of Dickens' Novels, without any of their numerous defects!*'

> Our first edition (20,000 copies) is exhausted, and we beg our friends to have patience for a few days.
>
> WANTED, 4,000 Agents to sell the above work ! !
>
> PRINTEM & SELLEM,
> *Publishers.*"

"Four thousand agents!" quoth Barry, looking over my shoulder; "I rather think it would take *forty* thousand to sell an edition of 'DAISY!'"

I laughed at my irate friend, and, igniting a fresh regalia, crossed my feet on the mantelpiece, and remarked, composedly,

"Now for the Critics!"

FINIS.

ERRATUM.

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